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SENATOR BORAH has kindly given us permission to print the following paragraphs from a letter to a mutual friend, giving his view of the European situation and what it needs at this hour:

> I agree thoroughly with the views which you express in your general discussion of the situation in Europe. My view is that there are three, possibly four, major propositions relative to the recovery of Europe. First, a revision of the Versailles treaty, a readjustment of reparations, the recognition of Russia by the United States, and drastic disarmament.
>
> I admit at least three are difficult problems. But they are not so impossible by any means as the recovery of Europe without their adjustment. Europe can never recover under the peace treaties and Germany never can pay the reparations assessed against her. There will be no disarmament in Europe until the Russian problem is settled. We have been living in a fool's paradise, talking about disarmament and better times. And ever since the Versailles treaty was signed, we have been drifting toward the rapids.

We are happy, indeed, to give currency to these views, and rejoice that the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee sees so clearly that there can be no peace in Europe until the Treaty of Versailles is revised according to the dictates of truth, humanity, and justice. We only regret that the Senator did not include, in the list of things that must be done to restore Europe, the abolition of tariffs everywhere. As long as these unnatural barriers to trade exist, there will be constant ill-will between nations and talk of war. We rejoice, however, that the Senator has spoken out more vigorously on the world situation than at any time heretofore.

THE FRENCH MEMORANDUM to the League of Nations on armaments reveals anything but a cooperative spirit. It says, of course, that France stands ready to consider all general solutions, that it asks for itself "no unilateral guaranties," and that the French "are prepared to extend their unqualified collaboration to any system for the general organization of peace," though only upon "definite pledges of effective mutual assistance in case of aggression." The memorandum insists that France has done a lot in the way of disarmament, and that, for example, it has increased its military airplanes and seaplanes only from 1,180 to 1,210 (Germany, of which it is so afraid, has not one). It admits that it has 400,670 trained troops at home and 237,363 abroad, and that it has largely increased the number of professional, or lifelong, soldiers, while tremendously increasing the fortifications on its borders. As Robert Dell points out in his article which we print elsewhere, it cannot be denied that the French military forces are about the same now as in 1912, despite the complete disarmament of Germany, while French military expenditures have increased to the enormous sum of $750,000,000. Here lies the real challenge to the world today.

WHAT IS DESCRIBED as "perhaps the most drastic economy order ever issued from the White House" has been sent by President Hoover to the heads of the various government departments and bureaus. In his letter of July 19 he called for the elimination or postponement of "all such activities as may be so treated without serious detriment to the public welfare." The President found that the various department heads were planning to spend more, not less, than they had spent in the fiscal year just closed, and this they were doing in the face of the fact that the last fiscal year showed a deficit of more than $900,000,000 and that they had already been warned to cut down. Quite obviously, Mr. Hoover does not anticipate an early upturn in business which would increase revenue receipts to the point where they would balance normal expenditures. Indeed, the President more than once stressed the fact that the "situation is a serious one." But his position would have been much stronger had he emphasized the need for economizing when the depression began almost two years ago. We might then have been spared much of the current deficit, the existence of which, we fear, may be used in the coming session of Congress as an argument against the expenditure of government funds to help those who are suffering from the depression. Nevertheless, we welcome Mr. Hoover's action, especially because it appears destined to hit the military and naval services harder than any other branches of the government.

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CHEERFUL, or even apparently cheerful, economic items are so rare nowadays that it is worth making the most of those we get. Curiously enough, the automobile industry seems to have done comparatively well in the three months ended June 30. For that period the General Motors Corporation reports an increase of 3.3 per cent in net income over that of the same quarter a year ago; the Studebaker Corporation an increase of 33.3 per cent. The Hudson Motor Car Company reports a net income of $300,000 compared with $226,000 in the same period of 1930; the Chrysler Corporation $3,232,000 compared with $3,228,000; and the Willys-Overland Company a net profit for the six months of $305,000 compared with $152,000 last year. Some of these gains in net income were achieved in spite of a falling off in sales; the volume of business of the Chrysler Corporation, for example, was only 77 per cent of that in the same period of 1930. In so far as the gains in net income are the result of new economies in operation, they are reassuring evidence that business in some lines has been able to make part of the readjustment that new conditions demand; in so far as the gains have been at the expense of labor they are of course less reassuring. But it is significant that the Studebaker Corporation sold more cars in the second quarter of 1931 than in the same three months in 1930, and that the General Motors Corporation reported an increase in number of cars sold of more than 6 per cent.

NOW THAT THE UNITED STATES has been awakened to the need for a major readjustment of war debts and reparations it would also do well to give serious consideration to the war-guilt question. It is true, as Foreign Minister Stresemann once pointed out, that Germany is not paying reparations because it may have been guilty of starting the war, but solely because it lost the war. Nevertheless, in fairness to that country we ought to do what we can to remove the black mark that has stood against its name these last twelve years. Impartial historians such as Professor Sidney Fay have effectively shown that the sole responsibility for the World War was not Germany's. Even Raymond Poincaré has indirectly admitted as much. More than that, this generous action would go far toward restoring the self-confidence of the German people, which they so sorely need in the present crisis. To this end the Shipstead resolution now before the Senate has been framed. It deserves the earnest and energetic support of all fair-minded Americans. It calls upon the government to take the necessary steps "to make it clear that it will no longer permit itself to be regarded, even by implication, under the terms of the treaty of Berlin of June, 1921, as acquiescing in the formal charge made in Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles to the effect that Germany alone was responsible for the war terminated by those treaties."

PRISONS are overcrowded, dark, ill-smelling, and vermin-ridden; prison food is bad; prison discipline is cruel, stupid, and unyielding; prisoners are hung up by the wrists, doused with cold water, kept for longer than two weeks in solitary confinement on bread and water, beaten with a strap, and jammed two and three at a time in cells four feet wide, seven feet long, and six and a half feet high. These foul and desperate conditions under which prisoners in America of 1931 find themselves are soberly attested by the Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, whose report on our penal system has just been issued. The report declares flatly that the prison system of the United States is a failure:

> We conclude that the present prison system is antiquated and outworn. It does not reform the criminal. It fails to protect society. There is reason to believe that it contributes to the increase of crime by hardening the prisoner. We are convinced that a new type of penal institution must be developed, one that is new in spirit, in method, and in objective.

This is a sweeping statement, but made by such a responsible authority that it cannot be pushed aside. It declares our prisons are unhealthful and extravagant; that our treatment of prisoners is cruel, ignorant, and shortsighted. These conditions apply generally to prisons over the country; there are practically no exceptions. Even the modern, electric-lighted, and more or less sanitary prisons constructed in the last decade are largely governed by the notion that the sole function of the prison is to keep the prisoner shut up. There the duty of warden and guard ends; thereby society is protected. We have been hearing for fifty years the pleas of penologists that the function of the prison is not only the incarceration but the rehabilitation of the prisoner. The present report indicates that these pleas have been largely in vain.

THE WICKERSHAM COMMISSION has been not only thoroughgoing in its indictment of our prison system, but has formulated an intelligent and careful program for the betterment of conditions. Its recommendations include classification of prisoners, segregation of the diseased and unfit, prohibition by law of brutal disciplinary methods, abolition of the contract system of prison labor and payment of a wage to prisoners for work done, the establishment of an efficient educational system in all prisons, greater use of indeterminate sentences and supervision of parole, and, last but not least, "broadening of probation methods so that no man may be sent to a penal institution until it is definitely determined that he is not a fit subject for probation." With the report's findings, painful and shocking as they are, anyone who is at all familiar with American prisons must agree; with the recommendations any intelligent person must agree also. There is nothing radical in these proposals, nothing that should frighten anybody; certainly there is nothing new in them—nothing that has not been said for years in the columns of *The Nation*. They have been made again and again by responsible body after responsible body. It is hard to say why they have not been heeded, why our prisons are among the worst, in physical conditions and in the treatment of prisoners, in the civilized world. Whatever the reasons for it, the fact remains. Our prisons are one of the dark spots on our civilization.

ALBERT B. FALL, who betrayed his country for a bribe of $100,000 when a member of the Cabinet of the United States, has at last entered prison. If we feel a certain satisfaction about this fact, it is not because we believe in prisons as at present operated, or because we vindictively desire revenge upon this broken old man. Far from it; it is a pathetic thing that one suffering from several incurable ailments, among them tuberculosis, must at his age be con-

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fined, even though only in a hospital ward. Yet we cannot but feel that if Fall had not gone to prison it would have been a grievous blow to the cause of justice everywhere. It would have intensified the widespread, and unfortunately too often correct, belief that there is one kind of justice for the rich man and one for the poor. It would have been pointed out that poor and friendless men who are ill of tuberculosis are committed to jail without question. Mr. Fall's last hope was his appeal to the clemency of Herbert Hoover, one of the men who sat beside him in the Cabinet of the United States, but never had the courage or sense of moral responsibility to lift his voice in protest against the rascalities of the Harding Administration. Mr. Hoover was the last man in the world who could have pardoned Fall, so it must have been easy for him to say no. But his own silence in the presence of the wrongdoing in which Fall participated will always be a blot upon the President's good name.

SOUTH AMERICA, with the help of the depression, continues to topple over its dictatorial presidents. The latest to go is General Carlos Ibañez of Chile. He has, said an official statement, "decided to abandon the presidency temporarily." His request for a year's leave of absence "in accordance with the law" was, however, abruptly rejected by the Chamber of Deputies. Thereupon he disappeared from the capital, leaving his office in the hands of Pedro Opazo, president of the Senate. The people of Santiago, who obviously know their dictators, stormed the American embassy in the belief that he was in hiding there. Like most South American dictators, President Ibañez used his control of the army to give him control of the economic life of the country. When he came into office in 1927 he instituted a number of agricultural and educational reforms, and he sought to strengthen the principal industry of the country by increasing the output and stabilizing the prices of nitrates. But these availed him nothing when he began losing his grip on the army. What was behind the disaffection in the military ranks which precipitated his overthrow has yet to be determined. It is nevertheless likely that unrest in the army simply reflected the growing unrest among the people which followed the dissolution of the world nitrates agreement. This compact was designed as much to protect Chile against competition from the artificial nitrates of Germany and France as it was to stabilize the world market. When the agreement was terminated a few weeks ago and prices began to slump, Chile was the first to feel the effects.

ONE NEGRO IS DEAD and four are missing as the result of a clash between Negroes and white officers at Camp Hill, Alabama. Sheriff J. Kyle Young of Tallapoosa County and one of his deputies were wounded in the affray. The reports describing the shooting and subsequent events are somewhat conflicting. Some say that the meeting the officers invaded with the intention of breaking it up had been called by the "Society for the Advancement of Colored People." The International Labor Defense declares the meeting had been arranged to organize a "share-croppers' union" to combine against the starvation wages being paid by Alabama planters. A third report asserts that the meeting was called to protest the death sentences imposed upon eight Negro boys at Scottsboro. Officials of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have denied that the "Society" mentioned in the Camp Hill dispatches has any connection with their organization. But whatever the organization, and whatever the purpose of the meeting, the action of the authorities in breaking up this and a similar gathering held a few days earlier was clearly unlawful. We unqualifiedly indorse the telegram sent by the American Civil Liberties Union to Governor Miller, which asked "a thorough investigation and an executive warning to your officers to respect the rights of Negroes and others to hold meetings to organize and discuss their grievances."

UNDER THE PRESIDENCY of Clarence Darrow the Victor L. Berger National Foundation, Inc., is well on its way, with the active cooperation of its vice-presidents —Jane Addams, John Dewey, Glenn Frank, Elizabeth Gilman, James Maurer, and Upton Sinclair. The purpose is to create a fund of at least $100,000 to aid the liberal press and, specifically, the establishment of a Socialist daily, or rather the maintenance of the Milwaukee *Leader,* which Mr. Berger founded and so long ably conducted. The idea is, however, that the foundation shall serve as a stimulus to the development of liberal newspapers throughout the country, in so far as its means may permit. Mr. Berger certainly deserved this recognition for his long services in the House of Representatives, his great public spirit, and, above all, his courage in telling the truth about the war in accordance with the best American traditions, for which an incredible judge passed a sentence of thirty-five years upon him—a sentence naturally done away with. B. C. Vladeck, of the Jewish daily *Forward,* is chairman of the board of trustees of the foundation and Stuart Chase is the treasurer; the headquarters are at 907 Fifteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

THE IMPENETRABLE AFRICAN FORESTS have been pierced with steel, and substantially the same journey that David Livingstone took two years to make is to be made by a railway train in a few days. The route is from Lobito in the province of Angola on the west coast to Beira in Portuguese East Africa on the Atlantic, a distance of 2,949 miles. The first train made the journey on July 1, crossing Portuguese, Belgian, and British territory. And the agent that worked the miracle—for to Livingstone, making his difficult and perilous way, it might well have seemed a miracle—is copper. Diamonds drew the railway north from Cape Town to Kimberley; gold drew it farther on to the Rand; copper has urged it on to Katanga, in the heart of South Central Africa. It is estimated that in a few years the Katanga and Northern Rhodesian mines will be in a position to export 400,000 to 500,000 tons of copper a year, or about a fourth of the present world consumption. One may well ask what such a plenitude of riches will do to the world market, already almost completely demoralized. But the history of the world in the last four centuries has been of just such problems. Columbus, with a new continent in his pocket, returned to extend immeasurably the borders of the ancient world. The riches of America were at first dazzling and then dangerous. So with the riches of Africa. There is far more there than the world now needs of precious metals, of tin, cobalt, uranium, iron, coal, gold, diamonds, and platinum. Our problem is one of adjustment and distribution.

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The London Failure—and After

THE all but complete failure of the London seven-power conference has put the world back into an extremely critical situation. The statesmen of Europe are again gambling with its fate as they did in 1914. If they realize more clearly today than they did then the perils in sight, they are apparently almost as helpless to avoid the catastrophe. From this moment on everybody's attention must be fixed upon Germany and England. The chief question now is, Can Chancellor Brüning hold himself in power? And can the alarming withdrawals of gold be stopped which are threatening to put England into almost as critical a situation as that in which Germany found itself more than two weeks ago? Upon the answers to these questions depends everything. The Germans are obviously straining every nerve to make good their previous errors; they are profiting by the prestige of the visits to Berlin of Secretary Stimson, Ramsay MacDonald, and Arthur Henderson; they have established an "Acceptance and Guaranty Bank," in which the Reich will hold two-fifths of the total capital of $47,500,000. This new institution will, it is hoped, not only hasten the stabilization of the domestic credit situation, but reinforce German credit abroad. Meanwhile, however, the condition in Berlin and the business and financial world continues chaotic. Checks by the thousands are piling up in the banks, factories are able to pay only half wages, and there is a complete disorganization of the ordinary transactions of the mercantile world. On top of that, the final bankruptcy of the great Bremen wool concern, which precipitated the failure of the Darmstädter and National Bank, has thrown 30,000 more persons out of employment. Rumors of a dictatorship in Berlin alternate with fears that it will not be possible much longer to keep the Hitlerites out of the government.

That the London seven-power conference was a failure everybody except Mr. Hoover can see. The President, however, exults over it, and with his familiar, but incredible naivete, not to say folly, announces once more that the end of the world crisis is now in sight. The seven-power conference had no other result than the announcement that the private bankers of the nation had consented to freeze their German credits—but these credits were already frozen, or would have had to be frozen in any case, since to call them would have completed the financial ruin of Germany. That could have been announced without any conference whatever, but Mr. Hoover is entitled to his joy if there was a psychological profit in announcing it at the end of the conference. But nothing can conceal the fact that Chancellor Brüning has returned to Berlin empty-handed. No long-term credit was extended, as was reported would be the case when *The Nation* went to press last week. And without a long-term credit it is hard to see how Berlin can be really saved. But the international bankers insist that with the Young Plan bonds selling at 56, it is impossible for them to offer new long-term securities issued for the relief of Germany, and that the only hope in that direction lies with the several governments. The latter reply, first, that there is no money in London; second, that our Congress would never consent to any more loans to Europe; and, third, that the French, who have the money and could help, will not do so save on terms that no German Chancellor could accept and remain in office.

This may be perfectly sound; it does not alter the fact that the leaders of the world seem about as helpless to stave off disaster now as were the governments of 1914. In the thirteen days prior to July 26, $145,500,000 in gold was lost by the Bank of England, $68,000,000 in three days. A continuance of this run would speedily reduce the British gold reserve to the $275,000,000 beyond which any further decrease would menace the currency and the whole stability of the British business world. That this will be permitted to come to pass we do not believe; we take it for granted that the American bankers will prevent such an outcome. The piling up of gold in Paris continues to evidence the nervousness of French investors and depositors, who have been engaging in an "almost frantic sale of sterling." The French situation has been marked by a slight decrease in unemployment, but the heavy decline of 10 per cent in railroad earnings continues. France's foreign trade shows a drop of 20 per cent for the first six months of 1931 as compared with the figures of 1930, imports falling off 13 per cent and exports 29 per cent, while the tremendous decrease in foreign visitors is also making itself felt. The Paris Bourse has reflected the disappointment as to London, and the substantial rise in the London bank rate to stop the drain of gold has resulted in the fall of every security listed in Paris, with trading extremely dull. Why under these circumstances the French government should continue its dog-in-the-manger policy and refuse to join whole-heartedly in relief to Germany, we cannot understand.

We are aware, of course, of the stock nonsense that the French government is "controlled by public opinion," and that all France still trembles in fear of Germany. We believe in neither contention. There is no public opinion in France save as it is reflected by the most corrupt and government-controlled daily press in the world; the people have no chance to make their opinions heard, and there is a growing minority who are bitterly opposed to the continuation of this French policy. Nor can we believe that the people would fail to respond if their so-called statesmen should now deliberately initiate a policy of good-will and understanding with the Germans, not, if you please, because they are Germans, but because the Reich happens to be the cornerstone of European economic health and of the existing social system. We confess that we find ourselves in accord with J. L. Garvin's editorial in the Sunday *Observer* that "all this misery and peril in Europe arise because Premier Laval's government and the Paris press assume that America and Britain are virtually powerless to take separate action. We are utterly convinced that this misapprehension will have to be removed before three months are out"—if Mr. Garvin is correct in believing that the existing situation can really continue for three months more without a catastrophe, which we very much doubt. Europe's statesmen, at best, have no time to lose.

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If—

THIS is the day of taking stock of America with innumerable "if's." *If* we had a five-year or a ten-year plan for the development of our industrial life, how should we apportion it and upon what theory should we proceed? *If* we were frankly to abandon our laissez faire policy, what then? *If* we were to enter the League of Nations, how should our foreign policy be altered? The questions are innumerable; the "if's" flash by like the lights on an underground railroad. Well, we too have our "if's"—many of them. Just now we have been amusing ourselves by putting this question: What would the United States be doing now if, instead of our present Congressional system and a President with a fixed term, we had a parliamentary government with a Ministry responsible to the Parliament, and therefore to public opinion?

Now the first result would be that if Mr. Hoover were a responsible head of a Cabinet instead of a President immovable for four years, we should have an entirely different attitude in the White House. It is one thing to know that one is fixed for four years and quite a different thing if the end of one's headship of the government may come at any moment. In the first place, Mr. Hoover, or any other President, would be so bent on holding his job now that he could not have his eyes firmly glued on renomination in 1932. That even a Prime Minister like Ramsay MacDonald may spend much time planning—and compromising—to remain in office we could not deny. But Mr. MacDonald, thanks to a superior constitution and a civil service which is wholly outside of politics, is under no temptation to intrench his control of the government by manipulating or threatening public office-holders. It is barely possible today to find a highly placed Republican who privately desires the reelection of Mr. Hoover, but it is quite impossible to find one who does not feel that Mr. Hoover can renominate himself if he desires to do so. We admit that there are countries—as our foreign correspondence has shown of late—where, by barring one's opponents from the polls or terrorizing them into staying at home, it is possible for an incumbent Ministry to keep itself in power. But we are writing of countries presumably controlled by law and enlightened public opinion, of heads of governments who do not seek to keep themselves in office by extra-legal methods, or pure chicanery. In no other government of first rank save ours is it so readily possible for the head of the country to use its permanent civil service in order to further his own personal ambitions.

Aside from the Executive, the chief weakness of our system is the inability of public opinion to obtain results quickly and directly. The Congress elected in November last has not yet been seated; the President will not call it together, and unlike other parliaments it cannot call itself. The political scene has changed a great deal since that Congress was chosen. We are back in Europe and our national situation has grown more acute in various directions; the distress among certain of our people has grown apace. Even when Congress meets in December it will not be the Congress which would meet were its members to be chosen this November instead of last. While its members will undoubtedly reflect the increased strain upon their respective communities, many of them would not be in a position to represent their neighbors at all if they were to run this fall. For the present Administration has grown increasingly unpopular; even in the theaters and music halls it is the butt of jests—bitter as well as good-humored.

If our Cabinet had seats on the floor of the Senate or House as a Ministry, its members could not escape a day-by-day questioning of their acts. They would have to go officially on record, for example, as to whether they do or do not agree with the attitude of the Red Cross in refusing to go to the aid of the starving miners because their plight is no act of God—we had thought that all events were the direct outcome of the acts of Divine Providence scourging or aiding us for our own good! The Cabinet would have to say whether it believed that the Kellogg Peace Pact meant something or was not worth the paper upon which it was written. Mr. Hoover, if he daily faced long rows of critics as does Ramsay MacDonald every legislative day in the year, would have to answer a host of questions, some to his discomfiture. Today even the White House press conferences are a waste of time and are practically abandoned. There is no one who can bring the President to book. Meanwhile, he can go on making certain his renomination at the next Republican convention—unless a political earthquake occurs—and if the Democrats are as asinine as usual, he may count upon his reelection.

But such as the system is, under it we work along. The almost incredible long-suffering and the great sense of humor of the American people together keep things unchanged. We have now been for decades without the political urge, without political curiosity, and press and public alike have lost their critical faculty—a faculty extremely keen in the days of Grover Cleveland and of Benjamin Harrison, of William McKinley and of William H. Taft. The question that will answer itself in the coming months is whether the suffering which the public is undergoing is sufficient to reawaken the spirit of revolt, which ought always to be latent in the American breast. It was Thomas Jefferson who felt that there should be a little blood-spilling every twenty-five years, so that the people in control of our government might remember who were the real masters of America. We do not look for blood-spilling, heaven knows; it would be a sorry day, indeed, for Mr. Hoover and all the rest of us if it should become necessary for the troops and the police to do as much shooting as they did in 1877. All of which, however, does not keep us from asking ourselves questions. We are in the same boat with the rest of our fellow-citizens; we shall all be asking more and more questions as to the why's and wherefore's and the if's, as the months that lie before us come and go. Only one thing is clear—we live in the most stirring and thrilling of times. He must be dull, indeed, who is not at least dimly aware that this old globe is turning at a faster rate than ever before, and that the womb of fate is bigger than ever with the destiny to come.

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A Coal Crisis Again

AGAIN we are faced with a crisis in the soft-coal industry. Once more we find a Washington Administration, professedly anxious to deal with the question, but moving with painstaking caution. Already rebuffed by a majority of the bituminous operators, Secretaries Doak and Lamont, upon the insistence of President John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers, have renewed their invitation to the operators to confer with government officials and labor representatives in Washington. "It is our desire," wrote Messrs. Doak and Lamont, "to assist in any workable and practical plan which might offer to contribute substantially to a solution of the difficulties in the coal industry." This sounds strangely familiar.

In 1919, when the bituminous miners struck, the whole weight of the government was thrown against them, but in 1922, when a similar crisis developed, President Harding expressed a desire to help find a solution. Secretary of Commerce Hoover took the initiative in bringing operators and miners to Washington for a series of conferences. We were at that time promised a solution. But nothing happened. Not long before the elections of 1924 another strike was threatened, and this time it was the turn of the Coolidge Administration to act. "The impending battle would have been staged in the spring of 1924," said Colston E. Warne in *The Nation* for April 4, 1928, "had not the Republicans thought it best to pacify the miners until after election. Under political pressure, an armistice—the Jacksonville agreement—was signed to preserve peace until April 1, 1927." The agreement was widely repudiated, particularly in the northern fields. W. G. Warden, chairman of the board of the Pittsburgh Coal Company, told a Senate committee early in 1928 that he had never even read the agreement, but nevertheless had felt free to break it without a moral qualm. The Senate was at that time inquiring into conditions in the coal industry, and President Coolidge hinted broadly of the need for definite action. But to no end. The industry was allowed to drift through the strikes of 1928 and 1929, so that today it is worse off than ever before.

Again the government is going about the matter in a haphazard way. It appears reluctant to use pressure against the operators, and it pretends that President Lewis and the United Mine Workers are competent to speak for labor notwithstanding that their influence has rapidly been waning of late years. The U.M.W.A. has been all but displaced by the National Miners' Union in western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio; it has had to give way to Frank Keeney's new union in West Virginia; it is losing against the invasion of the Industrial Workers of the World in Kentucky; and it is still a serious question whether the U.M.W.A. or Alexander Howat and his followers are to control the Illinois-Indiana district. Do Secretaries Doak and Lamont really believe that they can arrive at a satisfactory and lasting solution without giving these organizations a voice in the matter? Or are the Republicans once more merely seeking a temporary and meaningless agreement with the reactionary Lewis organization to tide them over the difficult months between now and the 1932 election?

Mr. Shaw and Russia

WHEN Bernard Shaw visits Soviet Russia, as he is now doing, the world is entertained by the spectacle of irresistible force meeting—irresistible force. Russia is the bad boy of nations, and Mr. Shaw, in spite of the benignity of his white hairs and his three-quarters of a century, is still the bad boy of the articulate world. For upwards of fifty years he has been engaged in the delightful occupation of giving the world a piece of his mind; since its birth in 1917 Soviet Russia through its foreign office and its press has done likewise. It is no wonder that many worthy persons were made uncomfortable by the painful plain-speaking of Mr. Shaw. And it is perfectly understandable that the other European nations should have quivered before the verbal assaults of the Soviets. When Mr. Litvinov was, on suffrance and as evidence of everybody's extreme generosity, invited to a disarmament conference he actually had the temerity to propose that the nations, led by Russia, disarm. Naturally enough, this proposal got the reception it deserved. To propose disarmament at a disarmament conference plainly implied gross insincerity, but fortunately one did not have to pay any attention to it. However, as more than one worthy delegate must have murmured to himself, it was just what might have been expected from a godless country like Soviet Russia.

There is, for the Soviets, one aspect of the situation that should offer consolation—although so far they have not seemed in need of it. For here is Mr. Shaw, all respectable and honored and white-haired and seventy-five. Those who might have been his critics two or three decades ago are either resting with the grass roots or turned into his ardent admirers. He is the bad boy who dares to thumb his nose at the world; but in addition, he is the prince of authors, the best intellect of his time, a dramatist of the first water in a nation of first-water dramatists. Ask any man in the street if this be not so.

Who can say that it will not be the same with Soviet Russia? In fifty years, when ten five-year plans have tumbled along after one another, when soviet factories are running smoothly, when collectivized agriculture turns out twenty-cent wheat, when the whiskers of the horrendous Bolshevik government have turned a dignified white, the world may perhaps have learned to admire, perhaps even to emulate. We have done a good deal toward catching up with Mr. Shaw. When his play "Getting Married" was presented in New York last winter it was received with respect tempered with boredom. "Old stuff," the audience said. But when it first appeared a score of years ago it was so startlingly fresh as to make aged gentlemen and maiden ladies shudder with horror. One has only to remember the thrill that went through a London audience, at the first performance of "Pygmalion," at Eliza's dreadful, dreadful word. That word, one hears, has become a commonplace of genteel English dinner tables. It is not quite impossible that in time nursery tales will go somewhat like this: "And the nice Bolshevik gentleman, with the long, long, white beard, stepped up to the horrid old capitalist and said: 'You get out of here.' And he did." Words used to frighten children sometimes become words to soothe them to sleep.

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Thunder in the Wheat Belt

By W. G. CLUGSTON

Topeka, Kansas, July 24

IT is difficult to put into words a description of the disaster which has come to the American farmer with twenty-five-cent wheat prices. It is difficult to describe what has been done to the farmer economically, and in hope, spirit, and morale; it would be dire folly to try to predict what the farmer, in his despair and desperate straits, may try to do to the political and economic structure of the nation if conditions do not improve before he comes out of his dazed confusion and begins to fight for the existence of himself and his family.

I do not want to appear radical, or an alarmist, but I am firmly convinced that there is today in the Middle West a menace to the existing order which is becoming more threatening than anything that has been known since the founding of the Republic. The producers who supply the food upon which the nation lives are facing worse than bankruptcy and the loss of their lands; many of them are actually facing a winter in which they will not be able to provide their families with food or fuel unless they are aided by the government or some form of charity. In the winter-wheat-producing areas the situation is more fraught with danger because it has come at a time when the farmers, with nature's aid, have produced more bounteous crops than ever before—because, as Governor Woodring of Kansas has said, "we are going through a panic in the midst of plenty."

The farmer who is compelled to sell his wheat for twenty-five cents a bushel, and his oats for twelve cents a bushel, has two ways of looking at his calamity, both of which are calculated to make him "see red." When he disposes of his wheat and goes to make purchases he naturally makes comparisons such as these: For the price of a bushel of sixty-pound wheat he cannot buy at a bakery three ten-cent loaves of bread. It takes approximately five bushels of wheat to buy enough standard-grade gasoline, with the State gasoline tax added, to make a hundred-mile trip in an automobile. A bushel of wheat will buy just one round of five-cent ice-cream cones for a family of five; if a farmer uses tobacco and chews one thick plug of Drummond a day (as many industrious chewers can do), it will take almost a bushel of wheat a day to keep him in chewing tobacco; if he smokes cigarettes and chews gum, a bushel of wheat will buy just one package of cigarettes and one package of gum. It will take 16 bushels of wheat (more than the average yield of a whole acre) to buy his wife or one of the children a pair of $4 shoes, and 120 bushels to buy a $30 suit of clothes.

Similar comparisons can be made as to the purchasing power of other farm products. The local Abilene, Kansas, produce market on the day this is written shows that a farmer's wife can hardly buy three spools of thread with the money received from the sale of a dozen eggs; a two-pound spring frier will not bring in enough money for her to buy a thirty-cent pair of cotton hose; it takes the proceeds of more than twenty-five pounds of butter fat to purchase a five-dollar hat.

Startling as these comparisons may seem, they do not begin to depict the seriousness of the situation the farmer has to face. They are only invidious comparisons. The real situation is that when a farmer sells a bushel of wheat for twenty-five cents he has absolutely nothing with which to buy a package of cigarettes, a plug of tobacco, or even a stick of gum, to say nothing of hats, shoes, or other articles of clothing for his family, for the simple reason that it has cost the best and most industrious of average farmers more to produce the bushel of wheat than he gets out of it—in many cases the cost is nearly twice as much, even in the big wheat-producing sections.

This means that the farmer has no money with which to pay his taxes, meet his current obligations, or pay the interest on the farm mortgage. What then will he do for food and clothing, and schoolbooks for the children, and medicines and doctor bills, until another crop is harvested? This question brings up the seriousness of the situation as it affects other individuals and industries in the agricultural sections. Beyond a doubt there is no one in the big winter-wheat belt who is not facing difficulties as a result of the farmer's plight. Banks must carry notes and mortgages on which they can collect nothing, and in financial circles it is admitted that some of the weaker banks probably will be unable to stand the strain. Grocers, clothing dealers, implement dealers, and all other merchants, especially automobile and radio dealers, are feeling the pinch and beginning to worry about survival. Even the doctors and undertakers are finding collections so slow that they are facing financial embarrassments.

The question of who or what is to blame for the distressing condition is, naturally, a controversial one which has no place in this article. But the farmers' ideas about where the blame should be placed should be of interest. It may surprise the Republican politicians to learn that many go back to the enactment of the Smoot-Hawley tariff bill as the beginning of their trouble—they believe that through the raising of import barriers other countries were brought or forced to similar procedures, with the result that international trade was curtailed and thus the world market for American grain was destroyed. Today there are probably more farmers who blame the high tariff for their hard luck than there are farmers who blame Russia, despite the fact that Russian competition has been played up as an important factor by supporters of the high-tariff atrocity.

If it is no surprise to the Republican leaders to know that the blame generally is laid at the doors of President Hoover and the Federal Farm Board, then it must, at least, be very painful for them to behold the flood of complaints that constantly pours into Washington. At present it is a question whether President Hoover or his Farm Board is more generally condemned by the farmers. The board, almost without exception, is being condemned for its refusal to agree to hold off the market its surplus from last year's crop in order to give the distressed farmers a chance to market their new crop. But in almost every farmer gather-

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ing the feeling is expressed that President Hoover is responsible for the Farm Board and that he must bear the blame when the board refuses to take any action. The European debt moratorium move has made many farmers more bitter toward Hoover because they feel he should have come to the aid of the American farmer in his crisis before going over to Europe to aid Europeans who are in distress. A public demonstration of this feeling was presented in Topeka, the capital of Kansas, last week when a dilapidated Ford touring car of obsolete model appeared on the streets with two men in it and a large sign painted across it which read: "We're just a couple of Hoover tourists going to the aid of Germany."

Another demonstration of the anti-Hoover feeling was given in a college-celebration parade at Hays, Kansas, in which there was a float loaded with men dressed as hobos, with a sign across the side of the float which proclaimed: "We are Hooverized." Many jibes are taken at Hoover, such as, "There is no doubt about our President being the world's greatest engineer—in a little more than two years he has ditched and almost drained the whole country."

Republican and Democratic leaders alike are showing alarm because they do not know how soon the farmers may start a revolt, or to what extent they may go if a revolt gets under way. In Kansas the situation has many elements of seriousness for the leaders of Sunflower puritanism. Dr. J. R. Brinkley, a goat-gland rejuvenating medico of Milford, who polled 183,000 votes as an independent candidate for governor in the last election without even having his name printed on the ballots, is threatening to run as an independent candidate again, and is out campaigning the State in an airplane, criticizing both the Republican national administration and the Democratic State administration. More alarming still, E. Haldeman-Julius of Girard, a former Socialist, an avowed atheist, and an open champion of companionate marriage, has announced himself as a candidate for the old Curtis seat in the United States Senate, apparently as a Republican. I have talked with conservative Republican leaders, and with farm leaders, who have told me that if conditions do not improve before the next election Haldeman-Julius may become a real factor despite the general Kansas repugnance to his views on religion, marriage, and economic questions.

The economic seriousness of the situation is occupying the attention of business men in the towns as well as worrying the farm leaders. There is uneasiness because "Coin" Harvey's new plea for a monetary revolution is getting some attention, and because A. C. Townley, who organized the Nonpartisan League in North Dakota, is now following the harvest up from Oklahoma and advocating Harvey's theories.

In Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska movements are under way to have moratoriums declared for the farmers to enable them to survive and hold possession of their farms. Banks have been appealed to to carry the farmers' paper; implement dealers have been asked not to press for payments due on machinery; and there is no doubt there will be agitation for tax-payment suspensions in some localities when tax-paying time comes. Adding to the alarm are such instances as the occurrence at Henryetta, Oklahoma, on July 18, when 150 farmers and jobless town workers marched on business houses and demanded money with which to buy food. If such a thing can happen in the "breadbasket belt of America" when fruits are ripe on the trees and berries on the bushes, when vegetables are green in gardens, and when the grain harvest is in progress—if such things can happen at such a time, what may be expected when the bleak, cold days of winter arrive? Believing a lot of things are liable to happen, Governor Murray of Oklahoma has called upon every city and hamlet in his State to hold mass-meetings on July 27 "as a preliminary step toward organizing a State-wide unemployed relief program for next winter." In communities where there is such a bounteous overproduction of food supplies that grain is being piled on the ground out under open skies—in such communities charity must be resorted to if countless families are not to suffer in hunger! Can such conditions continue for long in a country such as America?

The impression should not be given, however, that gloom is universal in that it is everywhere—or that hope has entirely succumbed to despair. The farmers have not yet gone into revolt; few even have gone into displays of ugly moods either in the cities or the rural communities. A farmer in one western Kansas town who was offered only sixty-six cents a bushel when he drove to an elevator with a load of wheat became so enraged he pulled the tail-gate out of his wagon and drove home, spilling the wheat along the street as he went. There have been a few reports of tenant farmers who have refused to harvest their grain, and occasional reports of landowners plowing under the grain when it was ready for harvest. But for the most part the farmers have gathered the grain with as much industry as usual, and they are holding on to it wherever possible in the hope that prices will soon be higher.

Thousands of farmers are wasting no time in grumbling but are "digging in" for the long, hard siege they see ahead. They are economizing and cutting expenses in every way possible; many will let their land lie fallow for a year, which means there will be a big acreage curtailment this fall. This, in turn, and in time, may help boost prices. It surely should if the Canadian crop turns out as short as indicated, and if Australia and the Argentine reduce their acreages in accordance with announcements. Then, too, settlement of the financial troubles of Central Europe may bring more benefits than most farmers anticipate, and it is entirely possible that the Hoover Farm Board may finally hear the pathetic appeals which are resounding across the plains. The one thing above all others which is sustaining hope is the general belief throughout the country and in the towns that conditions cannot get much worse—that under every law of averages whatever changes the future brings must be changes for the better. If this should not be true there'll be hell to pay—hell to pay with two-bit wheat.

Gulls

By WITTER BYNNER

Have you ever seen a gull with a hurt foot
And the others pecking it, toppling it,
avoiding it?
Have you ever seen gulls, the long, calculating
slant, the swoop, the strut,
the seizure, the laughter—
And then the lone one?

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President Hoover's Record

VII. Hoover and Power*

By AMOS PINCHOT

I

EVERY aspiring politician knows that barring a great national issue or some accident such as happened in the cases of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, he can never land in the White House unless, so to speak, shoved from behind by at least one strong industro-financial interest. For the man who sets his cap for the Presidency, the strategy, therefore, is predetermined. It is to win the backing of the best-organized and, politically speaking, most aggressive big-business group available.

Curtained off from the somewhat shoddy, inconsequential, but relatively open game we call politics, there goes on forever a game of another sort which, luckily for his peace of mind, the sovereign citizen is rarely allowed to glimpse—much less to sit in on. It is here, in the invisible game of grand politics, that things really happen. Here Presidents are chosen. Here history is made—also money in exceedingly large quantities. And as a means to these high ends, small men with large ambitions are transformed by the magic of propaganda into perfectly serviceable demigods, later, when occasion arises, to be flipped into office to the shouts of the happy multitude.

Few incidents in this game of American grand politics are more interesting, or I think more significant when viewed in retrospect, than the campaign in favor of the public-utility interests, and especially the power and light companies, that was waged by Mr. Hoover from 1924 to 1928, when, as Secretary of Commerce, he was already a candidate for the Presidential nomination.

Up to a few years ago the federal government played a comparatively small part in regulating public utilities. The State commissions took almost entire charge of them and State regulation was highly satisfactory, in fact, almost ideal from the point of view of the power companies, since in most States it amounted, as it does today, to no regulation whatever. As Professor John H. Gray, late rate expert of the Interstate Commerce Commission, points out, under State regulation the utilities charge, in practically every case, as much as the traffic will bear. "It is literally true," says Professor Gray, "that the public utilities have no regulation at all." And as a result the consumers pay extortionate rates not even remotely related to what the service is worth.

In a speech at the World Power Congress last July, which Mr. Insull vainly tried to have kept out of the newspapers, Frederick M. Sackett, American Ambassador to Germany and former president of the Louisville Electric Company, epitomized the position of the utilities: "I know of no other manufacturing industry where the sale price of the product to the great mass of the consumers is fifteen times the actual cost of production of the article sold." Current at the station is produced at from three-tenths to four-tenths of a cent per kilowatt hour. Making every allowance for transmission costs, the average of six cents per kilowatt hour paid by the American consumer for household service is simply a racket price—a price accurately reflected in the financial history of the companies, which, despite the vagaries of cream-skimming banker direction, has been one of astounding prosperity.

Into this paradise of high prices there entered in 1920 a serpent in the form of the Federal Power Act, passed through the efforts of a group of liberals, in and out of Congress, after a bitter struggle with the power people extending over fifteen years. The Federal Power Act, as the reader is probably aware, sets up a Federal Power Commission, with jurisdiction over all power developments within federal lands or on navigable streams, whether running through federal lands or not. It provides that licenses to operate private plants shall be limited to fifty years. It instructs the Federal Power Commission to ascertain the actual net investment of the utility companies—a provision highly objectionable to the utility interests, which are in the habit of "writing up" their investment accounts, for rate-making purposes, to several times the actual amount spent. It provides for recapture by the government at the end of the license period, and for the setting aside of an amortization fund out of excess profits. It also provides that if a city or State should decide to construct its own power plant, it shall have a prior claim to the power site.

While the Federal Power Commission leaves the business of fixing rates to the State commissions, its examination into the net investment acts as a check on the State commissions and courts, which, under the thumb of the utilities people, have heretofore allowed the companies to use the book value of their properties as rate bases. And these book values are almost always grossly padded. Out of many cases disclosed by the commission the following are fair examples:

CAROLINA LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY

Book value	$23,810,500.00
Actual investment	4,710,021.77
Total write-up	$19,100,478.23 or 405 per cent

In six companies acquired by the American Power and Light Company the commission summarized the write-ups as follows:

Book value	$123,725,358.16
Actual investment	55,284,426.40
Total write-up	$68,440,931.76 or 124 per cent

Inter alia, the Federal Trade Commission reports write-ups in five subsidiaries of the Electric Bond and Share Company amounting to over three hundred millions.

By passing the Federal Power Act Congress effectively hung over the inflated rate bases and extortionate profits of the utility companies a sword of Damocles. But the sword

* Seventh of a series on President Hoover's record. The eighth in the series, being the second part of Mr. Pinchot's article on Hoover and Power, will appear next week.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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did not fall until the Boulder Dam and Muscle Shoals controversies arose and the Federal Trade Commission, spurred by the Walsh resolution providing for a Senatorial inquiry, began its investigation of the power trust. In the meantime, the utility interests, foreseeing this dangerous situation, had started a nation-wide backfire against interference by the federal government. Their program was simplicity itself. Federal regulation must be discredited at all costs; regulation by the State utility commissions must be pictured as an adequate protection for the consumer; and, finally, public ownership and operation must be painted as an unsound experiment, highly prejudicial to self-government.

It is precisely at this juncture that, with all the prestige of his office and high reputation as an engineer, the Secretary of Commerce appears on the scene as champion and propagandist of the utility interests. In a series of articles and speeches delivered before conventions of utility companies and State public-service commissioners, Mr. Hoover painstakingly builds the myths (a) of the big-hearted utility magnates, filled with the spirit of service, and (b) of the socially minded State commissioners, whom he portrays as little less than a consistory of saints. These speeches and writings were promptly printed and distributed by the utility people in immense quantities.

Exhibit Number 65 of the Federal Trade Commission's investigation is a list of orders for pamphlets placed from 1924 to 1927 by the Department of Public Information of the National Electric Light Association, the propaganda agency of the utility companies. Glancing down its seven pages, we note that the pamphlets are by such writers as Bruce Barton, Owen D. Young, Merlin Aylesworth, Andrew Mellon, Samuel Insull, Martin J. Insull, and Mrs. John D. Sherman, president of the National Federation of Women's Clubs. There are also a few small orders for reprints of speeches critical of the utilities, apparently distributed to members of the National Electric Light Association as suggesting the need for refutation. With the exception of Mr. Barton's brief messages to customers, none of the pamphleteers approach Mr. Hoover in respect to the number of pamphlets ordered. Here are some of the entries:

June, 1924	Convention Addresses Herbert Hoover	Large	10,000
		Small	5,000
June 25		Small	50,000
July 3		Small	50,000
July 22		Large	10,000
October, 1924	Herbert Hoover, Government Ownership		500,000
July, 1925	Herbert Hoover, State *vs.* Federal Regulation of the Power Industry (printed by Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.)		50,000
October, 1925	Why the Public Interest Requires State Rather than Federal Regulation of Electric Public Utilities, by Honorable Herbert Hoover before the National Association of Railroad and Utilities Commissioners, October 14, 1925 (printed by Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.)		50,000
November, 1925	Ditto		25,000

Meantime, the Joint Committee, the Washington lobby organized by the utilities people to fight the Boulder Dam and Muscle Shoals bills, is also pamphleting the Hoover speeches. And Mr. Insull, in his report to the Public Policy Committee, Forty-ninth Annual Convention of the National Electric Light Association, May, 1926, says: "In a recent article on 'State Utility Control, the Only Way,' however, the Secretary of Commerce has stated the status of these problems in a most masterly manner, and your committee felt it could not do better than to make the following extracts from Mr. Herbert Hoover's article a part of this report." The article referred to is a solemn warning against federal interference and a panegyric of State regulation, under which Mr. Hoover declares that the rates charged for electricity have been just and moderate, while the interest and dividends paid by the companies have "never yet exceeded 6 per cent upon the values of all the properties for rate-making purposes." The State commission, he adds, should receive credit "for these conditions—their regulation has been effective."

During this entire period Mr. Hoover's writings and speeches abound with praise for the leaders of the utility industry, and he congratulates America on the fact that "the new generation of administrators of these enterprises has firmly grasped its responsibility to the public." He insists that "there has been a genuine growth of business conscience and service, and this growth is far more precious than any amount of legislation." The reprint of this speech, by the way, is still being given out by the Joint Committee from the Graybar Building in New York. Mr. Hoover also says that the utility people are no longer in financial control of the utilities. On the contrary, it is his opinion that they are controlled by the public itself. Under State regulation, he points out, the earnings of the utility companies have been held down to "between 6 and 8 per cent upon their invested capital." A somewhat remarkable statement, for Mr. Hoover could hardly have been unaware that at that time there was no comprehensive source of information as to the capital invested in utilities, except the companies' own figures. And these, as our Great Engineer should have known, were boosted—both for rate-making and stock-jobbing purposes—until they had become, as Professor Gray says, "higher than any capitalization they ever dared to water."

In June, 1925, Mr. Hoover appeared as principal speaker before the San Francisco convention of the National Electric Light Association. In his address, pamphleted by the Joint Committee, he again expresses his admiration for State regulation. He has, it seems, made an investigation of the State public-service commissions and he finds that "with very little criticism they are proving themselves fully adequate to control the situation." They are, in fact, "doing their jobs well." He sees no reason for the imposition of "a superior regulation. . . . Nothing could be a more hideous extension of centralization in the federal government than thus to undermine the State utility commissions and State responsibilities." He regards the men at the head of the utility companies as belonging "to a new school of public understanding as to the responsibilities of big business to the people."

In this particular speech, however (at San Francisco, June, 1925), Mr. Hoover makes one grave tactical error. By emphasizing the interstate character of electric power he, by inference, justifies regulation by the federal government:

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> The wider interconnection between these regional systems is also proceeding apace. For this again makes use of the power capacity below the peak load by an interstate diversification. Such a flow of electricity will soon be traceable through the many regional systems continuously from Montana west to the Pacific, thence south to Mexico —a total of 1,800 miles. Shortly, power tie-ins will be completed in the Middle West and Southeastern areas, coursing all the way from Wisconsin and Michigan around through West Virginia and North Carolina to Arkansas and Louisiana.

Such an utterance, though strictly in accordance with the facts, was from the point of view of the power people far from politic. It would not do at all to have our Secretary of Commerce running about the country telling the public that electric power was, in effect, a commodity of interstate commerce. So, having accepted an invitation to speak at Washington, D. C., before the convention of the National Association of Railroad and Utility Commissioners four months later, Mr. Hoover accommodatingly reverses himself:

> The argument is sometimes used that the power situation is parallel with the railroads, where federal regulation has been found absolutely necessary. This is an illusion. It differs in several profound respects. Power has no such interstate implication as transportation. . . . *Furthermore, there has been outrageous exaggeration of the probable extent of interstate power. For economic reasons these power districts will in but few cases reach across State lines.*

Mr. Hoover is always at his best when dealing with technical subjects. The deadly accuracy with which his mind works is more clearly seen if we join the two foregoing utterances and read them as one:

> The wider interconnection between these regional systems is also proceeding apace. . . . Such a flow of electricity will soon be traceable through the many regional systems continuously from Montana west to the Pacific, thence south to Mexico—a total of 1,800 miles. Shortly, power tie-ins will be completed in the Middle West and Southeastern areas, coursing all the way from Wisconsin and Michigan around through West Virginia and North Carolina to Arkansas and Louisiana. . . . Furthermore, there has been outrageous exaggeration of the probable extent of interstate power. For economic reasons these power districts will in but few cases reach across State lines.

Apparently between June and October a little bird has whispered a sweet something into the Hooverian ear. It must be remembered that the National Electric Light Association is, politically, an exceedingly potent body. Mr. Owen D. Young acts as a sort of chief justice of its Public Policy Committee, which represents practically all the utility interests and the great banking and insurance interests behind them.

In both the San Francisco and the Washington speeches Mr. Hoover points with pride to State regulation. It has brought "an assurance of justice and protection to our citizens." There is "no surer method of sapping the foundations of self-government" than to weaken the State commissions and extend federal control over the utility companies "which so vitally touch the life of every family, every industry, every community."

In 1925 the Joint Committee lobby in Washington issued a booklet entitled "Government—Federal, State, Local —Fails in Industry." On the title page are quotations from Abraham Lincoln and Herbert Hoover, an indication that the utilities people are now casting soft glances at our Secretary of Commerce, as having earned the right to be viewed as Presidential timber. The booklet contains an anthology, "Great Minds Speak," the great minds including, besides Mr. Hoover, Simeon Fess, Jim Watson, John Spargo, Calvin Coolidge, and others. Here again Mr. Hoover drives home his State-regulation doctrine and, as proving that federal regulation threatens the home and the fireside, says:

> I have said in another connection that, after all, the object of our whole social and economic system is the family and the home with its independence, its freedom, and its comfort, and if we are to set up more systems of alien regulation and bureaucratic domination, we shall inevitably undermine all of these treasured essentials of life.

In 1926 Mr. Hoover goes on hammering federal regulation. Electric transmission, he says, should be controlled by the individual States and not by the federal government. In his Seattle address, however, the conservationists having gone after him pretty hard for his attitude on State control, and the West having been aroused by the Boulder Dam situation, he makes the concession that where a power site is to be used for power only (that is, not for flood control or irrigation) it should be leased under the provisions of the Federal Power Act. As we shall see, after his election he goes back on this by trying to break down the Federal Power Act and attacking its constitutionality.

In 1927, as Presidential nominations approach, Mr. Hoover becomes reticent, not to say mysterious. He says that the development of water power on the St. Lawrence should be undertaken by "appropriate agencies." But he refuses to say whether the agencies should be private or public. The New York *Times* comments thus on his statement of January 27 as to the Colorado flood-control and water-supply project: "Neither the Boulder Dam bill nor any other specific measure was mentioned by Mr. Hoover."

In the meantime two significant events have taken place. Mr. Hoover's power secretary in the Department of Commerce was Paul S. Clapp. His solicitor was Judge Stephen B. Davis. These two were Mr. Hoover's main aides on power questions. In behalf of the government Judge Davis had charge of the Boulder Dam controversy.

At a utility convention held in Chicago on October 13, 1927, Philip H. Gadsden, vice-chairman of the Joint Committee, vice-president of the United Gas Improvement Company of Philadelphia, and president of the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, reported that at the suggestion of Mr. Hoover Judge Davis would be released from the Department of Commerce to become the director of the Joint Committee (the lobby formed, as we have stated, to oppose the Boulder Dam and the Muscle Shoals bills). Davis's employment by the Joint Committee began on June 1, 1927, at a salary of $30,000 a year.

Meantime, what became of Mr. Clapp? He also was released by Mr. Hoover, but to become managing director of the National Electric Light Association. So, before Mr. Hoover left office, he had seen to it that the two authorities in the Department of Commerce next in command to himself in that conflict that allegedly goes on between the government and the power people were installed, one as head

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of the power lobby, and the other as leader of its propaganda forces.

Here it might also be noted that William H. Murray, to whom in 1923 Mr. Hoover gave the job of conducting the government survey of superpower, was the same Mr. Murray whom the National Electric Light Association had employed in 1921 to make a report on the Ontario publicly owned hydroelectric system. The Murray report brought from Sir Adam Beck, chairman of the Ontario Hydroelectric Commission, the comment:

> Mr. Murray has made grossly incorrect and misleading statements; he has garbled documentary and other data and then employed them as premises from which to derive conclusions. . . . In a word, Mr. Murray has employed methods demonstrably reprehensible and unprofessional.

Mr. Hoover entered the Republican Convention of 1928 with the "new generation of administrators" pulling for him like wheel horses. He won the nomination practically unopposed. In the campaign itself Mr. Hoover's utterances remained sibylline. In his acceptance speech in August, 1928, at Stanford University, he avoided the dangerous subject of power, announcing, however, that he would later discuss a number of questions "of the first order." But thereafter his nearest approach to the power question was in his speech at Elizabethton, Tennessee, on October 6, 1928, when he said:

> I do not favor any general extension of the federal government into the operation of business in competition with its citizens. . . . There are local instances where the government must enter the business field as a by-product of some great major purpose such as improvement in navigation, flood control, scientific research, or national defense, but they do not vitiate the general policy to which we should adhere.

A Scripps-Howard editor thereupon asked Mr. Hoover if he referred to Muscle Shoals. And he replied, "You may say that means Muscle Shoals." This was wired to the Scripps-Howard circuit, and on October 8 the story was carried under the headline, "Hoover Wants Government to Operate Muscle Shoals." Instantly a tense situation was precipitated. But this didn't last long. For by six o'clock of the same day the candidate gave out another statement, declaring that the power generated at Muscle Shoals "should be disposed of on such terms and conditions as will safeguard and protect all public interests."

Shortly after Mr. Hoover's election, that is, on November 17, 1928, the *Electrical World*, whose senior editor, W. H. Onken, Jr., was at that time chairman of the Prize Awards Committee of the National Electric Light Association, commented editorially as follows:

> Election over, the stock market has reflected by sharp advances in public-utility stocks a sentiment prevailing among utility executives as well as in banking circles that Mr. Hoover's triumph in the national election augurs well for the electric public-utility companies. It is a tribute to the industry to get such an indorsement, even though it be indirect; but the only assurance the utilities are justified in holding firmly is that any Congressional legislation affecting them will be accepted or rejected by a President possessing toward utility problems a wise and an understanding heart. Any other interpretation of the election is unwarranted.

In my next article I shall discuss Mr. Hoover's power record as President.

What I Believe*

By MORRIS R. COHEN

IN the pride of youth I used to characterize myself as philosophically a stray dog, unchained to any metaphysical kennel. It seemed to me better to brave the muddy realities of the unprotected out-of-doors, the uncertain food, the attacks from the watch-dogs of comfortable homes, and above all the chilling rains and winds of factual experience. For the roving way led through bracing airs over green hills to broad sunny plains and sparkling rivers flowing to distant seas. But as I approach the years of post-rheumatic wisdom, I am beginning to find increasing refuge in the great palaces and parks of the classical philosophies.

I no longer despise those who, like our great poet-philosopher Santayana, set up a wall around their garden to shut off the disconsolate hills and the monotonous sea as well as the smoke and din of the market place. After all, no matter how small our plot of ground, we always have with us the fundamental elements—earth, air, sky, and rain. To the enterprising mind, the mystery of creation is as profound and as challenging here as elsewhere. The sun and stars, and the alternations of bright days and dark nights persist through the changes of cosmic weather. And the human scene, likewise, offers the same elements of hunger and love, pride and foolishness, joy and suffering, throughout diverse ages and climes. I have thus learned to see virtue in the stably organized as well as in the wild or untamed intellectual life. Nevertheless, I have never become completely at home in even the greatest of academic philosophies. I can never forget that there is a world outside of their boundaries, and their guards look askance at me because I never completely get rid of the out-of-door mud.

The central fact to which, it seems to me, prevailing creeds refuse to accord sufficiently serious attention is the obvious impossibility of attaining omniscience. Endowed as we are at birth with infinite ignorance, no amount of knowledge which we acquire in our finite existence can completely exhaust all the complex and temporally endless realms of being. This of course does not justify the absolute denial of all knowledge. No skeptic believes his own opinions to be as baseless as those of his opponent. To recognize ignorance, we must know something. But simple honesty requires us to admit that none of our creeds are entirely free from guesswork. This lack of omniscience is not cured by reliance on faith, intuition, or authority. For however cer-

* The third of a series of articles on this subject by well-known men and women. A fourth will appear in an early issue.—Editor The Nation.

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tain we may *feel*, we never *know* that such faith, intuition, or authority will not in the end prove itself mistaken. Faith may influence the conduct resulting from our beliefs, but it cannot change the character of our ancestry or of the events which have already happened, and no one really believes that faith will enable him to escape death and other incidents of our common fate. Nor does the practical necessity of acting on our beliefs make them true. The misery of mankind testifies to our many poignantly unsolved problems.

To the inadequacy of our knowledge must be added the tremendous force of temporarily pleasant illusions, compared to which the love of truth is pitifully frail. Indeed, we may regard the attraction which illusion has for us as similar to that which a flame at night has for a moth. The sources of illusion are many: inherited forms of expression, fashions in respectable or approved opinions, the idols of our tribe or clique, of the market place, of our professional conventions, and the like. But the greatest of all is that vanity which is rooted in our very existence as individuals and which makes each one of us view himself as *the* privileged center of the universe. Is not the zenith directly over *my* head? And is not everyone else and everyone else's point of view only a part of my wider world?

In our daily life this shows itself in our self-centeredness, in our inability to do justice to others or realize that they have feelings and rights like our own. We cannot fully see the interests of others because we identify our own with those of humanity or of eternal righteousness. Thus the working classes speak of themselves as the people, the middle classes as the public, and the upper classes as the country. In philosophy this fatal vanity shows itself in anthropomorphism, in making man the central aim or goal of the whole cosmic process—though no one disputes the evidence of astronomy and geology that the life of the human species is but an episode in the history of the cosmically tiny bit of dust, our earth, which has had a beginning and is therefore bound to have an end.

From this point of view the great line of division is not entirely between ancient religion and modern science. Fundamentalists, liberals, moralists, and "scientific" evolutionists are at one in pretending to have plumbed the depths of the universe and to have found that it is all planned in a quasi-human way for our "uplift." On the other hand great religious teachers, like the morally wise men of science, have taught the great lesson of humility—that there are always vast realms beyond our ken or control, and that the great blessing of inner peace is unattainable without a sense of the mystery of creation about us and a wisely cultivated resignation to our mortal but inevitable limitations. The necessary effort to understand and control external nature does not require the silly pretension that we can become the omniscient and omnipotent rulers of the universe.

The worst offenders in this respect are, indeed, those physicists and biologists who, in trying to reconcile science with the vague sentimentality which they call religion, abandon altogether the habit of demanding rigorous evidence, which is the essence of science, and indulge in utterly irresponsible statements based on complete ignorance as to the nature of religion, morality, and their history.

I do not wish to restrict the liberty of prophesying. A scientific specialist has a right to be a member of a church as of a political party, and to be as confident as a good husband or anybody else that his is the best possible choice. But he has no right to claim the authority of science for it. The theory that atoms are composed of electrons cannot prove liberal Protestant theology, nor does the "curvature" of space establish the truth of the Christian moral code. It is sentimental vanity and not science to speak of man as the highest outcome of evolution. In point of sober fact every existing species is just as much the last stage of "evolution." And the probabilities are that man will disappear long before the bacteria and other "lower" forms which now feed on him, but which have a more ancient and more stable biologic existence. None of the facts of natural selection prevent the stupid from multiplying their kind or the cruel and ruthless from surviving in the brute struggle. Biology does not show us more righteousness in the world than that which human beings exercise; and the ancient observation is still true that rain, sunshine, and earthquakes, growth, disease, and death visit the just and the unjust alike.

There are many today who cry out hysterically that without the anthropomorphic illusion the value of life and all zest for it disappear. We may sympathize with the personal distress of those who cannot emotionally readjust themselves to new views. But we must not forget that anthropomorphism has been at the root of the superstitions that have made human life full of hideous terrors, so that emancipation from anthropomorphic religion has been hailed by many, from the days of Epicurus and Lucretius to those of Shelley and Bertrand Russell, as the most joyous and beneficent liberation. Certainly it is possible for a materialist like Democritus to be known as the most cheerful and benevolent of philosophers, and for a thoroughgoing naturalist and opponent of anthropomorphism like Spinoza to be a model of serenity and of the intellectual love of God.

So long as we lack omniscience and omnipotence life will necessarily contain a tragic element. Death will continue to rob us of those we most dearly love, and unforeseen circumstances will frustrate our most cherished plans. But we cannot overcome this by wilful illusion, any more than the ostrich (according to the slanderous account of ignorant mortals) can escape the hunter by burying his head in the sand. And if we are told that some do attain bliss through ignorance, we reply that success in a lottery is no argument for lotteries. The safer way to peace and serenity is through the cultivation of intelligent courage and wise resignation. We need courage to look into our own heart and clear it of the foolish desires which make us sow vain hopes and devote needless toil and anxiety to raise bitter crops of disappointment. And we need resignation to learn to live in a world that is not formed just for our comfort. A wise Frenchman has well said that we need not throw to the dogs all that is not fit for the altar of the gods.

It is fashionable today to despise this ancient wisdom and to profess the belief that the progress of science will enable us to conquer nature completely so that we shall have a heaven on earth. Sober facts, however, give no support to this vain hope. Great as has been the contribution of science to human comfort, it has undoubtedly also served to increase our unsatisfied desires and our capacity for poignant suffering. Thus despite the beneficent progress of medicine it is not at all certain that life has become on the whole less painful, and there is every indication that the habits developed by our machine age are reducing the span of years

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which the adult American can be expected to live. Moreover, it is possible that with the decline of liberalism and the gradual uniformity and standardization of ideas which modern machinery facilitates, we may choke that free intellectual variability which is the source of genuine progress in science. Many conditions in Russia, Italy, and even in the United States point in that direction. In any case the history of the human race offers a picture of an arduous and perilous journey in which each one of us drops out before the end is in sight. What makes it possible for us to carry on, instead of quitting as we can when we really want to, is not our guess as to the unknown goal, but rather the zest developed by our actual daily experiences, by our organic activities, by the light and warmth of the sun and air, and by the joys of human companionship. When the zest for life is really gone all words of comfort or exhortation are vain. There is nothing to which to appeal. But wise reflection may fan the flame when it is low, illumine our labor, and increase the scope of our peaceful enjoyments.

The realization of the pathetic frailty of the knowledge or beliefs on which our life depends, thus leads not to despair but to open-eyed courage. But it also points to a most intimate connection between scientific method and liberal civilization. Science is not, as it is popularly conceived, a new set of dogmas taught by a newer and better set of priests called scientists. It is rather a method which is based on a critical attitude to all plausible and self-evident propositions. It seeks, not to reject them, but to find out what evidence there is to support them rather than their possible alternatives. This open eye for possible alternatives, each to receive the same logical treatment before we can determine which is the best grounded, is the essence also of liberalism in art, morals, and politics. Conservatism clings to what is established, fearing that if we let go, all the values of life will perish. The radical or revolutionary, impressed with the evil of the existing order or disorder, recklessly puts all faith in some principle without regard for the hidden dangers which it may contain, let alone the cruel hardships which readjustments must involve. The liberal views life as an adventure in which we must take risks in new situations, but in which there is no guaranty that the new will always be the good or the true. Like science, liberalism insists on a critical examination of the content of all our beliefs, principles, or initial hypotheses and on submitting them to a continuous process of verification so that they will be progressively better founded in experience and reason.

It is fashionable nowadays to belittle the reasons men give for their faith. "Who," asks James, "ever heard of anyone changing his religion because of a reasoned argument?" It is difficult to answer this because we have no way of counting all those who, though unwilling in the heat of argument to admit the force of their opponents' reasons, yet sooner or later are so affected by them as to use them against others. Reasons are themselves part of our beliefs. And can we maintain that beliefs are of no influence in our lives?

On matters of human life and fate those addicted to much reasoning have not been generally placed in the foremost rank occupied by the great religious and moral teachers. Simple folk distrust those clever fellows who by reasoning seem to make the worse appear the better cause. We recognize the substantial unsoundness of certain conclusions before we are able to place our fingers on the exact fallacy in the argument which supports them. All this applies also to the seemingly more cautious and technical reasoning which passes as scientific method. Sound judgment often rightly rejects propositions in education or social science that are "proved" by formal definitions, statistical charts, graphs, and other paraphernalia. For superficial research workers, too readily impressed with their easily learned methods, often lack the native intelligence or breadth of view to prevent them from giving absurd interpretations to their statistical results. No amount of training in rational science can supply native intelligence where it is lacking. Yet training in reason is undoubtedly a necessary aid to all who can learn. How far it is necessary to make our reasons explicit depends on diverse circumstances. But we are generally safer if we have carefully reasoned out our position.

The prophet may deliver his burden with no warrant but the awful "Thus saith the Lord"; and the poet may impose his own passionate vision without any authority except the magic of his words. But men must use reason to weigh the truth of what rival prophets and poets have said. And he who helps them to reason more justly renders a service second to none in importance and beneficence.

Unless men reason they remain sunk in blind dogmatism, clinging obstinately to questionable beliefs without consciousness that these are mere prejudices. "To have doubted one's own first principles," says Justice Holmes, "is the sign of a civilized man." And to refuse to do so, we may add, is the essence of fanaticism.

The fanatic clings to certain beliefs and in their defense is ready to shut the gates of mercy on mankind, precisely because he cannot see any alternative to them except utter chaos or iniquity. Rational reflection, however, makes us see other possibilities and opens our minds to the thought that some of the moral or physical principles which seem to us self-evident may be only sanctified taboos or inherited conventions. The latter may be useful and necessary to save us the trouble of painful thought for which we have no time or inclination in the rush of our practical activities. But they may also be obstacles to a richer life.

Those who confuse life and external motion often claim that thought or reflection makes our action less resolute, and they urge us to stop thinking and do something. But that men's thoughtless or impulsive acts are always wiser than their reasoned conduct is hardly shown even in the case of Hamlet. To reflect that in the absence of omniscience all our principles of morality and conduct are but hypotheses need not prevent us from staking our lives on these anticipations of experience and from fighting as valiantly as we can for what we hold dearest. But it makes us more chivalric, tolerant, or sympathetic with those poor souls who risk their all on some other guess. I do not believe in the adequacy of the usual sentimental interpretation of the Golden Rule to love my neighbor as myself. My neighbor has a right to think the form of my love for myself quite foolish and to resent having it inflicted on him. Nor do I see any good in loving my neighbor's wife and children as my own. Love means discrimination and preference, and the obverse of that is natural aversion. Civil society depends, not on blindness or insensibility to the loathsome traits of our fellow-mortals, but upon respecting their rights without taking them to our bosoms. This can be achieved only through sympathetic

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understanding. Cooperation with those from whom we differ is possible only if we rationalize our beliefs and thus make them intelligible to those having different backgrounds.

In general the value of rationality is similar in morals to that in science. It enables us to frame policies of action and ethical judgment fit for wider outlooks than those of immediate physical stimulus and organic impulse. In enabling us to anticipate the future and adjust ourselves to it in advance, it lifts us above the necessity of living from hand to mouth in the mere immediacy of the moment. It thus enlarges our being and gives us strength to contemplate new physical and moral possibilities without that vertiginous bewilderment which comes to creatures of mere routine when they face the unfamiliar.

Danger Ahead in the Coal Strike

By MAURITZ A. HALLGREN

Pittsburgh, July 21

TODAY the coal strike in western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio has an outward appearance of peace and quiet. True, numerous reports of violence have come into Pittsburgh during the past week. Only yesterday William Simon, member of the National Miners' Union, was shot to death in a picket-line skirmish at Martins Ferry, Ohio, while the day before more than a hundred persons were injured when a United Mine Workers' meeting at Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, broke up in a riot. A few days earlier a miner's home was set afire at Midland near Canonsburg, and a company house at Atlasburg was wrecked by a bomb. Moreover, nightly attacks on unescorted strikers and workers continue in various sections of the coal country. But these are only surface indications of a tense situation. The violence thus far reported, with the exception of the killing of a miner by a deputy sheriff at Wildwood a few weeks ago, has been sporadic in nature. It has mostly resulted from the taut nerves and growing uneasiness of the strikers. Everywhere one goes through the bituminous fields one finds evidence of this nervousness. A stranger in a coal town is eyed with deep suspicion; husky, desperate-appearing men move over to meet him, putting him on the defensive with their menacing silence until he establishes his identity. The Communist organizers in every mine town, and even many of the agents of the United Mine Workers, have their personal bodyguards. Many of these men are armed, though I learned by careful inquiry that for the most part it is the U. M. W. A. agents who are carrying guns.

In such an atmosphere anything may happen, and there are competent observers here who believe it will happen soon. Yet the tenseness to be observed in the coal fields is only in small measure due to organized agitation. It has grown of itself, fed upon starvation wages and harrowing working conditions, and has not been directly fostered by either of the two unions involved in the strike. Officials of the National Miners' Union have made a sincere effort to check the violent inclinations of some of their followers. Some weeks ago Vincent Kemenovich, official of the N. M. U., was quoted by the New York *Times* in a dispatch from Pittsburgh as sounding "a warning of impending trouble" and revealing that "the strikers are armed." Kemenovich denied to me that he had ever made such a statement. He declared that a threat of this sort would have made him liable as an accessory before the fact in any criminal case arising out of violence on the part of the strikers. That the authorities would not hesitate to proceed against Kemenovich, if the opportunity presented itself, is indicated in the case they are trying to build up around Thomas Myerscough, another N. M. U. leader. Myerscough led the demonstration at the Wildwood mine a few weeks ago. He was arrested before a single shot had been fired or head cracked by the deputy sheriffs. He sat quietly in the sheriff's wagon throughout the shooting that followed. He was found to have been unarmed. Nevertheless, he is now being held, with Deputy Sheriff Herbert Reel, on charges of manslaughter in connection with the killing of Pete Zigarac, one of his own pickets.

Some of the rank-and-file speakers at Communist meetings are, however, advocating violence. At Fredericktown in Washington County Colston Warne, William Nunn, and I heard a speaker named Williams urge the strikers to "wait for the scabs in front of their homes and bust 'em in the snoot when they come from the mines." At the N. M. U. conference held here last week Jim Grace, striker from Harlan, Kentucky, declared: "We must show a united front, and if necessary shoulder arms and fight for freedom." Almost every camp we visited was literally deluged with copies of the *Daily Worker*. Bloodthirsty headlines were flaunted before the hungry strikers: "Secretary of Chinese Communist Party Executed; Wall Street Is Back of His Murder"; and "Beat Back Scabs in Mill Strike." Such inflammatory stories cannot help inciting the coal workers to violent action. More than that, the strikers seemed to find unusual satisfaction in reading stories of this sort. No other literature or newspapers were to be seen, but it is doubtful whether at this stage anything but the *Daily Worker* would have a real appeal for the long-suffering miners.

Yet it is obvious to anyone who spends a few hours in the N. M. U. headquarters on Pennsylvania Avenue that the Communists are not looking for trouble. Their war along three fronts in the coal fields—against the operators, the United Mine Workers, and starvation—is altogether too serious a matter for them to allow their followers to get out of hand. They know that an invasion of the bituminous country by the State militia or by federal troops, which is constantly being rumored, would quickly follow widespread outbreaks, and would just as quickly put an end to their activities. Hence they are attempting to proceed along nonviolent lines, using orthodox strike tactics to further their ends. Despite this subordination of revolutionary aims, the Communists here are operating on a war basis. The most powerful of the party leaders, among them William Z. Foster and Alfred Wagenknecht, have come from New York to assist Frank Borich and Vincent Kemenovich, the

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N. M. U. officials, in conducting the strike. Working with them are numerous officials and organizers of the Trade Union Unity League, who attend to the more important details and acts as liaison officers between Pittsburgh headquarters and the leaders in the field. Routine office work is handled by younger members of the party who receive no compensation of any kind. They live off their savings while they do secretarial work, turn out circulars, receive visitors, answer telephones, and run errands. When their money gives out they leave Pittsburgh to return to their old jobs or to look for new ones, and other young Communists come in to take their places.

The demands of the N. M. U. are not comparable with the absurd demands the country has come to expect from Communist strike leaders. They ask for a scale of wages higher than those now being paid, but lower than the Jacksonville rates, for a union checkweighman at every mine, for enforcement of the eight-hour day, and for recognition of their union. Nothing whatever is said about revolution, or about labor participation in the management of the industry. The U. M. W. A. could not be more reasonable. In fact, the very moderation of the N. M. U. program has forced the United Mine Workers into a position where they must either offer the miners something more and thereby decrease their chances of winning over the operators, or something less and so lose what little they have left in the way of rank-and-file support in the bituminous fields.

Three weeks ago the U. M. W. A. signed an agreement with the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal Company, although the United Mine Workers had had nothing to do with the strike in the Pittsburgh Terminal mines. It was organized and managed solely by the N. M. U. For a week or two it looked as if this was the entering wedge that would separate the Communists from all hope of victory. It was widely believed that other operators would follow suit, using the U. M. W. A., which they had for years been fighting to destroy, as a weapon with which to beat off an even worse menace, the National Miners' Union. All along it had been clear to the Communists that this was the one factor the United Mine Workers had been depending upon; the latter would let the Communists bear the brunt of the strike and then themselves step in and appropriate the fruits of victory. The plan might have worked had the Pittsburgh Terminal agreement given the men anything at all resembling an improvement over present wage scales and working conditions. But, as Vincent Kemenovich put it, "the men went on strike against starvation wages, and now they expect them to accept a scale that is even lower." It is not entirely fair to say that the Pittsburgh Terminal wage rates are lower under the new agreement, but because of more difficult working conditions imposed upon the miners the pay actually received often works out that way. I have before me a pay slip issued to one of the employees of this company. It shows that for a half-month's work ended February 15 this man earned exactly $12.40. But the man's debts to the company for medical fees, powder, and purchases at the company's store (where prices are from 60 to 100 per cent higher than in the independent stores) were greater than his earnings, so the space marked "Balance Due" was filled in with two crosses (called kisses by the miners). He received not a cent in currency for his half-month's work, and had received nothing for more than a year. He was forced to live on credit at the company store, and so was constantly in debt to the company. The U. M. W. A. agreement would, he thought, improve this situation, but it failed to do so, and therefore this man again has quit work. He found the wage scale had increased, but so, too, had the amount of dead-work (removal of slate and debris for which the miners are not paid), and the timbering (which likewise draws no compensation) had also increased. The result was that he was getting less pay, not more, for the amount of actual labor he was performing.

One of the Pittsburgh Terminal mines affected by the agreement is that at Coverdale, Pennsylvania. It normally employs 910 men; the agreement brought more than 800 back to work. But at the end of the first week this number had dropped to less than 600, and on the following Monday only 391 men reported to the pit bosses for work. Picketing by N. M. U. strikers may have been partly responsible for the defection. On that particular Monday morning we went out early to watch the picketing. The strikers gathered on a public road just as dawn was breaking. They were not fighting men; they looked cowed and despondent and noticeably undernourished. A few of them hobbled on canes, so old were they. And when the deputy sheriffs and State police drove up in their impressive automobiles, the strikers took on the aspect of whipped dogs. The deputies kept them moving in silence, arranging their line of march so as to keep them out of sight of the mine tipple more than half the time. One man was arrested for calling out to the few workers who came that way, and others now and again cried out with little enthusiasm: "Come on, you scabs, join the line." The whole show was pathetic; it could not by any stretch of the imagination be called effective picketing. Yet a hundred fewer men reported for work that morning. They stayed away, as some of them told me, not because of the picketing, but because they were "just as bad off under the new agreement" as they had been before.

As a matter of strike strategy the United Mine Workers have been outdone by the Communists. The latter have entered every field in the Pittsburgh area. They have planted organizers, disciplined working men and women, in almost every company "patch." They have mapped out their fight on a working-class basis. The United Mine Workers have been largely inactive so far as organization goes. In only one or two of the fields have they taken a hand in leading the strike. They have made the mistake of sending well-dressed, well-fed officials and organizers to talk to the miners. They have made the further and more serious mistake of compromising with the operators in the matter of the Pittsburgh Terminal agreement, and the rank and file are openly saying that the U. M. W. A. "tried to sell us out when they signed that agreement." In consequence the United Mine Workers have lost most of their former supporters. We found very few miners who would speak well of the organization, and even among the U. M. W. A. members a feeling of deep bitterness toward the officials, particularly John L. Lewis, was unmistakably revealed. Indeed, I have never heard a man denounced in more venomous terms than those I have listened to here in the last few days. Only one man was to be found, a paid U. M. W. A. official, who had a kind word to say for President Lewis. It is probable that Dr. Warne was correct

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when he said after our tour: "The time is rapidly passing when operators will have the option of signing with the United Mine Workers." Indeed, to a lay observer such as myself it would appear that that time has already passed. Meanwhile, with the operators refusing to deal with either union, with the Communists and United Mine Workers at each other's throats, and with the chances growing that a settlement between operators and miners at this late day will not solve the basic problems, the bituminous industry continues to drift into a zone of real danger. Further drifting can only mean open warfare, civil strife on a scale unprecedented in this country.

Does France Want War?

By ROBERT DELL

Paris, July 13

WITH the main argument of Professor Guérard's interesting article in *The Nation* of July 8 I entirely agree. We must get rid of this "guilty nation" myth, which is still too prevalent in Europe. I notice with alarm that too many people in England have become as unreasonably anti-French as they were unreasonably anti-German a few years ago. But I cannot agree with all that Professor Guérard says about official French policy and there are some inaccuracies in his article.

1. "France," that is, official France, certainly does not desire disarmament. She is the greatest obstacle to it in Europe. Official France may desire peace, at any rate does not want war, but does any government ever want war if it can get what it wants without it? War comes because there are certain things that governments want more than peace, and because they pursue policies that lead to war. Briand has twice publicly threatened Germany and Austria with war if they make the *Anschluss*. French expenditure on armaments is much more than $357,556,000. It is about $750,000,000 a year, including the instalments for the fortifications of the new eastern frontier (on the other side of which is a demilitarized zone guaranteed by the Treaty of Locarno). But it is dissimulated by the distribution of large sums in the amounts voted for departments other than the military and naval departments. This dissimulation was exposed in detail a few months ago in an article in the Paris *Populaire,* to which no reply has ever been made. Moreover, French expenditure on preparation for war steadily increases. The total army effectives in 1930 were not 467,987, but 555,087 (*Annuaire Statistique,* page 272), and I am doubtful whether this total includes all the colored troops, although it professes to include them. This is about the same as the figure for 1912. No comparison can be made with 1913, when war was believed to be imminent and the conditions were abnormal. The number of conscripts under the colors has been reduced by the reduction of the period of military service to one year (it was two years in 1912), but the number of professional soldiers has been increased. And this is the French army on a peace footing; on a war footing it consists of all able-bodied Frenchmen and hundreds of thousands of native conscripts from the colonies. Germany, on the other hand, which in 1912 had also an army on a war footing consisting of all able-bodied male inhabitants, has now an army of 100,000 in peace or war. The tonnage of the French navy allowed by the Franco-Italian naval agreement was about 10 per cent less than the tonnage of the French navy in August, 1914, and official France has now, by a shocking breach of faith, repudiated that agreement on the ground that it did not give France a sufficiently large navy. The tonnage of the British navy allowed by the London agreement is 47 per cent less than its tonnage in August, 1914. The war of the future is likely to be mainly in the air. France is now spending on her air force two and a half times as much as she was spending six years ago and has the largest and most formidable air force in the world. England is spending rather less on her air force than six years ago and has deliberately allowed herself to fall to the fifth place among the nations of the world as regards the air force. Germany, of course, has no air force at all. An air force is a purely offensive arm. In short, France is the most formidable military power in the world. Her armaments far exceed what she requires, on the most liberal estimate, for purposes of defense. Official France maintains these immense armaments, if not with aggressive intentions, at least as an instrument of political domination.

2. Professor Guérard says that "France" believes that peace must be based on world organization. So do we all, but official France wants a form of organization, at any rate of European organization, that will stereotype the territorial status quo in Europe and prevent its alteration even by peaceful means. She is definitely opposed to the revision of the peace treaties by any means and says so frankly, although she has been forced to accept certain modifications in them. The arbitration accepted by official France is a purely juridical arbitration. The only function of the arbitrators is to be the application of the treaties—they are never to arbitrate *ex aequo et bono,* that is, on the merits of the case. The British conception of arbitration, on the other hand, has always been arbitration *ex aequo et bono.* To put it in another way, France stands for the letter of the law alone —or of what passes for law—Great Britain for law and equity. This divergence, which is to be seen in the respective judicial systems of the two countries, is at the bottom of all the difficulties at Geneva about proposals for what is called "organized security," such as the Protocol of 1924. There are also different conceptions of "security." Some of us, including the French Socialists, maintain that security will be obtained by arbitration and disarmament. The French official view is that there can be no disarmament until "security" has been obtained—by continuance of armaments.

3. I agree with Professor Guérard that the French alliances are liabilities, not assets, but that is not the official French view, nor was it with the aim of incurring liabilities that the French system of alliances was created. It was with the aim of making a "barbed-wire barrier," to use Clemenceau's phrase, against Russia and also Germany. I

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do not understand how Professor Guérard can say that France did not group the allied countries under her leadership. The whole system of alliances was initiated by France in 1919. If Professor Guérard is right, why does France cling to her system of alliances? Out of purely disinterested benevolence? At Geneva, in 1924, Briand and Paul-Boncour on behalf of the Herriot Government refused to abandon the alliances even in return for the protocol. The British delegation proposed that all alliances should cease five years after the ratification of the protocol. France refused to agree. I may add that the existence of secret military conventions between France and certain other countries is a standing violation of the Covenant of the League of Nations and those conventions are null and void by the Covenant because their text has not been registered and made public. Any French or other signatory government could therefore repudiate them, and I hope that some day that will happen.

4. It is a historical fact that France militarized Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, and her other allied countries. Their armies have been created with French money, French war material, and by French officers. France (and England too) egged on Poland to make war on Russia and refused to allow Pilsudski and Paderewski to make peace when they wished to because Russia had offered them extraordinarily favorable terms. All the credits given by France to Poland had to be spent in France on war material and military equipment. A Polish prime minister told me so; he said that Poland had never received a single penny in cash from the French Government. France is now arming Jugoslavia against Italy. After the armistice the German Government offered to give Poland an access to the sea by making the Vistula navigable for big ships and giving Poland a port at its mouth. The French Government forced Pilsudski to refuse the offer and cut Germany in two so as to keep Poland and Germany permanently at enmity. It was part of Clemenceau's policy. (Several countries in Europe, by the way, have no access to the sea and seem to get on all right without it.) There is reason to believe that some of the military conventions that France has made with other countries force those countries to keep their armies up to a certain strength. In short, the French system of alliances is, as Briand let out in an unguarded moment in the chamber (the remark was omitted from the report of his speech in the *Journal Officiel*), incompatible with the Covenant of the League of Nations and it is one of the greatest obstacles to any sort of world or European organization. If it continues, it must lead to the formation of a hostile combination and the division of Europe, as before 1914, into two armed camps. France has created a league within the League and on almost every occasion has said: "My allies right or wrong." Has Professor Guérard forgotten that France prevented the League Council from taking any action when Poland seized Vilna by force? Does he know what the French attitude at Geneva is about questions of "national minorities" when the country concerned is an ally of France? Has he read Briand's abominable speech on the question of minorities at Geneva last September—a speech which a member of the British delegation described to me at the time as the most perfidious that he had ever listened to?

I rub my eyes when I read in Professor Guérard's article that France has proposed the United States of Europe. Can he possibly be referring to Briand's memorandum in May of last year? The first step toward the United States of Europe is the suppression of tariff barriers between the European countries. Not only does France oppose even the smallest step in that direction—including the harmless "tariff truce"—but she tries to prevent other countries from suppressing their tariff barriers and keeps on raising her own.

If, as Professor Guérard thinks, the trend of French policy is likely to remain unchanged in the immediate future, heaven help Europe! But I am more hopeful than Professor Guérard, for I see symptoms of growing opposition to that policy in France. Daladier, president of the National Executive of the Radical Party, has proposed that the alliance with Poland should not be renewed when it expires next year. There is an increasing belief that the alliances are liabilities, not assets. The Socialist Party at its congress at Tours quietly dropped for the first time Jaurès's scheme of a "national militia" (formulated at a time when Germany had conscription), which is the first step toward a policy of abolishing conscription. There are also disquieting symptoms. The temper of the French bourgeoisie is very bad on the whole—unpleasantly like the temper of 1912. Too many people talk about sending an army corps into Germany—they have virtually forgotten the Treaty of Locarno. The servile press has worked up violent hatred of Germany and America, and cartoons in every satirical paper represent Uncle Sam as a sort of Shylock cutting off for the benefit of Germany a pound of French flesh. Yet if America or England or both would only give a strong lead in the matter of disarmament, there might be a response in France that would surprise everybody. There will be a general election in France while the disarmament conference is sitting—unless it breaks in confusion at an early date—and if the French supporters of disarmament were given something to fight on, the result might be very satisfactory. The French always like a principle and no principle appeals to them more than that of equality. Try them with the principle of equality between all nations in the matter of disarmament, that is to say, the acceptance by all nations, *ceteris paribus,* of the conditions imposed by the peace treaties on the conquered countries.

Contributors to This Issue

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In the Driftway

THE world, as commentators have observed from time immemorial, is full of paradoxes and illogicalities. Take railway cars. Now the Drifter enormously prefers the American Pullman, or even the day coach, to the European compartments, which give one the benefits neither of privacy nor of publicity. The seats are uncomfortable, and half of the passengers are compelled to ride facing backwards and to sit staring at the other half. The first trains, of course—as anyone can see either from illustrations or in the specimen on exhibit at the Grand Central Terminal—were merely a series of stage-coaches hitched together with a locomotive in front. The European mind, being conservative, when it developed the later railway carriage simply telescoped a series of stage-coaches—the present compartments—on to one set of wheels. The American mind, more enterprising, less tradition-bound, designed the day coach and the Pullman.

* * * * *

BUT confronted by the problem of the sleeping-car, the American mind broke down. The Drifter speaks with feeling, for, after a blessed respite, he was recently obliged to travel on one. Now no one except a professional Japanese acrobat, the Drifter contends, can learn to get undressed and dressed without not merely exasperation, but a profound sense of personal humiliation in the cramped horizontal position which the Pullman berth compels. What becomes of the concept of personal dignity when one tries to get one's trousers on or off in such a position? How women put up with the more complicated processes of their toilet under such conditions the Drifter cannot conceive. True, some passengers attempt to stand while dressing, but run the grave risk of getting badly bumped and having their feet stepped on by people walking down the aisle. Further, the Pullman curtain does not even assure privacy, and is surely no protection whatever against adjoining conversations.

* * * * *

THE European *wagon-lit*, an adaptation of the European compartment, is at least a generation ahead of the Pullman sleeper. It is private; it shuts out other people's talk; it is comfortable to sleep in, and it permits one to undress and dress sitting down or standing up, like a lady or a gentleman, instead of prostrate on one's back. Well, there are hopeful signs. The Pullman company in the last year or so has introduced what the Drifter thinks it calls "double-bedroom" cars, which are practically arranged like the European *wagon-lit*. Such cars, however, are still very few in number, and available only on such crack trains as the Twentieth Century. And for travelers going alone they are pretty expensive. Americans will probably continue to suffer from the Pullman sleeper for at least the next twenty years; and as, with heads and heels on the mattress, they arch their backs to get their trousers or girdles on, they will even congratulate themselves on living in the country that surpasses all others in its rapid adoption of the last word in physical and mechanical comfort.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

A Cry for Help

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: This is a bitter cry for relief.

On July 6, 23,000 coal miners in the Kanawha Valley of West Virginia came out on strike against starvation. Coal operators have repeatedly refused to meet the West Virginia Mine Workers in joint conference. As a result, 90,000 human beings—workers, their wives, and little children—are today crowded together in the bleak mining camps of West Virginia, putting up the fight of their lives in the lowest-paid mining area of the country. To their demand for decent conditions and a more tolerable existence, the coal operators have replied with wholesale evictions and the guns of private guards.

These are the days when miners' children follow their mothers about the kitchen asking for food—and there aren't any potatoes or flour in the house. The child who gets even canned milk is lucky. Not new conditions these, but the ones which have existed for years, since the union was destroyed. Now the miners are seeking through their own endeavors to win freedom and a little happiness for themselves and their children. A strike means suffering, but there is no other way that they can win through to better days.

This is therefore a blunt, perhaps too blunt, request to give and give hard. Your contributions will give these workers food and spirit to carry on their struggle. Make checks out to Forrest Bailey, Treasurer, and mail immediately to the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, Room 1001, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City.

New York, July 10 NORMAN THOMAS, Chairman
JOHN HERLING, Acting Secretary

H. A. Miller—Teacher

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In the discussion of Herbert Adolphus Miller's treatment by Ohio State University one central factor seems to me to be inadequately stressed. A professor's public activities often receive notice, while enlightened teaching, year in and year out, is less likely to attract attention. As a former student under Professor Miller, before he went to Ohio State, I want to add that this case is of public concern because it involves one of the finest teachers ever available to an American university.

There would be some to differ. Miller has never had any use for cut-and-dried formulas in education. He was always cynical about the grading system revered by orthodox pedagogues. He would never stand over a lazy student with any sort of whip. The main point is that Miller has the power of being fascinatingly interesting to alert pupils, of making education adventurous, of stirring his students to seek new facts and appreciations for themselves. He was a pioneer in the educational method of taking students directly into contact with the institutions they were investigating. If he occasionally minimized the more formal outlines of his courses, he always had on tap an amazingly wide knowledge, flavored with a mellow and essentially tolerant philosophy. A mind would be hopeless if it did not grow under his stimulus.

Entirely apart from his extra-curricular interests and public services, Miller's unique value as a teacher is the greatest loss to the student body of Ohio State.

Brussels, July 7 DEVERE ALLEN

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Books and Films

This Is the Death

By HOWARD McKINLEY CORNING

This is the death: the dying of the hands;
The slow, pathetic parting of no pain—
The summer wasting in a cage of sands
Whereon time pours like rain.

It is so frail a passage to this sleep;
So numb along the wrists the respite moves
The fingers loosen what they most would keep,
Rapture from what it loves.

Where then is heard the bell, exceeding sweet,
Swung by the hands to music; and where then
The chosen clusters that the lips might meet,
As once—and not again?

It is the hands slow dying into age
Before the sentient pulse; it is the rapture
Numb in the crimson shadow of its cage—
Is the death they capture.

There is no other death: that the hands refuse
All that once was their brave analysis.
This is the long farewell, and we cannot choose
Death other than this.

The Faiths They Live By

Living Philosophies. By Albert Einstein, John Dewey, Sir James Jeans, H. G. Wells, Theodore Dreiser, H. L. Mencken, James Truslow Adams, Julia Peterkin, Sir Arthur Keith, Irving Babbitt, Beatrice Webb, Joseph Wood Krutch, Fridtjof Nansen, Lewis Mumford, Robert Andrews Millikan, Hu Shih, Hilaire Belloc, J. B. S. Haldane, George Jean Nathan, Irwin Edman, Bertrand Russell, and William Ralph Inge. Simon and Schuster. $2.50.

THIS is a profoundly interesting volume, and from some aspects a very important one. Future generations may find it an invaluable guidebook to the intellectual temper and the winds of doctrine that prevail in our own day. Where the contemporary reader sees mainly the individual differences between the views of these contributors, his son or grandson, with the advantage of the perspective that only time can give, will see the common underlying assumptions and attitudes that more or less unite them. How grateful we would be today for a compact volume like this in which a score of the great Victorians—Darwin and Carlyle, Huxley and Arnold, Spencer and Newman, Pater and Dickens, Gladstone and Bradley—had attempted to set down in a dozen pages each their credos and "philosophies of life"! How much more grateful, many of us, for a similar symposium compiled by the great figures of the eighteenth century, the Elizabethans, the Florentines, or the Greeks! Perhaps only two or three of the twenty-two contributors to the present volume reach the stature of the great Victorians just named; yet what most of them have to say is surely worth attending to, and not a few of the credos are written with charm and flavor.

The reviewer's task in dealing with such a volume, however, is not an easy one. A summary of each of these twenty-two philosophies in turn would be dull, disconnected, and probably fatuous; a doctrinal criticism would simply add a twenty-third philosophy; while to pretend to find something common among all of them would be disingenuous, and probably lead to serious misrepresentation; such common elements, as I have hinted, are likely to be discovered only by our descendants. The only thing the present reviewer can find in common, for example, between Theodore Dreiser's contribution and Hilaire Belloc's is that both of them are half irritating and half amusing: Belloc's because of its narrow and cocksure Catholicism ("The Faith explains; it explains fully; and it is the only thing that does explain"), and Dreiser's because of its naive and almost equally dogmatic nineteenth-century mechanism, as well as its general messiness of thought and expression.

Yet there are, it is true, one or two qualities obviously common to a large number of the contributions. Most of the contributors have attempted to set down their beliefs in as highly generalized a form as possible, and they have, instinctively perhaps, attempted to set down the views which they believe to be personal to themselves, rather than those that are commonly accepted or already incorporated in the established sciences. Thus Sir James Jeans tells us nothing of his specific opinions in his own science of astronomy, but rather of his views on such leading social questions as democracy, socialism, and eugenics. (In this field he turns out, incidentally, to be surprisingly reactionary, and hardly very scientific: for example, in discussing eugenics he makes the implicit assumption that the persons with the soundest physical and mental genes are identical with the present "successful classes"; it would be interesting to hear what a biologist like H. S. Jennings would have to say about that.) Nearly all the contributors, also, tell us something of their religious beliefs—or rather, of how they came to abandon their religious beliefs. The contributions of Bertrand Russell and the Chinese writer Hu Shih are particularly appealing because they are not merely cross-section views of their present outlook, but brief intellectual autobiographies.

It is significant, also, that hardly any of the contributors attempt to tell us what they believe is "the meaning of life." Several of them regard the question itself as absurd. Thus Irwin Edman writes that he does not believe that "life in general or the world in general has any meaning"; he does not even think "there is any meaning in saying that they could have." But, he adds, "many things, all things in nature, may have meaning; and any life may generate its own purposes or ends. . . . Not what life means, but what meanings it may have, is what counts." John Dewey expresses a similar view, and considers it vicious as well as pointless to talk of *the* meaning of life or *the* purpose of the universe, because such a monistic approach prevents us from recognizing the "plurality of interconnected meanings and purposes" that human life may have. Einstein, finally, remarks that "to ponder interminably over the reason for one's existence or the meaning of life in general seems to me, from an objective point of view, to be sheer folly." So modern science and philosophy, instead of answering this immemorial question, simply slam the door in its face. Nevertheless, Einstein, too, points out that everyone must hold certain ideals to guide his aspirations: "The ideals which have always shone before me and filled me with the joy of living are goodness, beauty, and truth. To make a goal of comfort or happiness has never appealed to me; a system of ethics built on this basis would be sufficient only for a herd of cattle." Einstein's contribution, incidentally, is the shortest in the book, and almost as condensed as his revolutionary mathematical papers on relativity.

One more general quality of the book is worth remarking.

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Very few of the writers—with the exception of a professional apologist like Hilaire Belloc, or Irving Babbitt, who resumes his usual shadow boxing with the ghost of Rousseau—are inclined to appeal to Authority to support their opinions. James Truslow Adams, it is true, argues in favor of the traditional ethical judgments by appealing to "the wisdom of the race," but this appeal seems to me very dubious. It would be interesting to draw up a list of some of the practices and institutions that this racial "wisdom" has sanctioned in the past: slavery, caste systems, war, conquest, marriage indissoluble on any grounds, complete parental tyranny, religious persecution, the intolerance of any sort of freedom of thought, and the entire network of superstitious taboos—not to speak of the fact that each isolated race's "wisdom" has sanctioned such different practices from the others'. No, the twentieth century doubtless has its own appalling defects, which will be fairly clear to the twenty-first century; but it seems none the less to have reasonably good grounds for examining with a very skeptical eye the alleged wisdom of the ages.

It would be pleasant to go on to discuss some of the admirably provocative contributions of such writers as Lewis Mumford, Irwin Edman, Joseph Wood Krutch, H. L. Mencken, J. B. S. Haldane— But I began by admitting that such comprehensiveness was impossible.

HENRY HAZLITT

A Rounded Biography

Pepys, His Life and Character. By John Drinkwater. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.

CONTRARY to the popular notion the existence of the "Diary" does not render superfluous a scholarly biography of Pepys. In the very frankness of his self-revelation he has quite unintentionally obscured the more substantial basis of his fame. To readers of the "Diary," unless they be uncommonly lacking in response to the charm of human foibles unaffectedly portrayed, Pepys seems a man who found his greatest satisfaction in hours given to mirth; he hardly suggests the serious empire-builder, concerned chiefly with the effectiveness of the fleet and the single-mindedness of men's service to a not always grateful monarch. Mr. Drinkwater's study, easily the finest portrayal of Pepys yet produced, succeeds in giving a true portrait of a whole man. The author makes no effort either to disregard or to deprecate the Admiralty Secretary's lighter moments; he does, however, prove conclusively that the revels with Mistress Knipp or with pretty housemaids do not constitute the entire life of the man. For the Pepys Mr. Drinkwater portrays we feel not merely tolerance or amused recognition, but as well a genuine respect and admiration.

In Pepys we perceive a man who held public office not only because he wanted to earn a substantial livelihood, but even more because he found real satisfaction in making a contribution to the public weal. In a day of lax political morals he did not refuse all irregular emoluments. He did maintain, however, a precious sense of self-respect which made it literally impossible for him to do that which would bring disgrace or material harm upon his beloved London or, even more, upon his England. Pepys loved his fat partridge and his port, and he cherished his shining guineas, but he possessed a sense of integrity that he would not sell to get riches or to preserve his goods. Mr. Drinkwater shows us an industrious and enlightened public servant not afraid to be efficient and honest in the midst of confusion and corruption. And for having done so he deserves the heartiest thanks of all lovers of Pepys, and of all who believe, even though despairingly, in the feasibility of a decent public service.

DONALD A. ROBERTS

Catullus, 1931

The Poems of Catullus. Translated by Horace Gregory. Covici-Friede. $5.

HORACE GREGORY'S task as the translator of Catullus is not that of the purely literal translator or of the translator who aspires merely to throw the Latin into a conventional English verse heavily laden with poetic diction. Any approximation of the Latin meters in English is impossible, and the inversions of the English speech which invariably result from fitting the Latin phrase to the English metrical pattern are likely to be very artificial. Familiarity with and a wish to avoid these pitfalls, on the one hand, and the desire truly to re-create the poetry of Catullus, on the other, led Mr. Gregory to use modern free verse, a form which is a better approximation of the Latin than most conventional verse forms in English. He knew, moreover, that the flavor, the original freshness, power, and feeling of Catullus could be best conveyed in strictly modern English—English which is not provincial but which is completely of this day and flexible as the literary language of poetry is not.

The poems of Catullus, the young poet who died at thirty, give a fine portrait of the best of the poet's life, and present a record of the times in which he lived. Translated as they are here into modern English—even where the use of an anachronism is necessary to make the idea clear and emphatic for the modern reader—they are as vivid as they were to the friends and enemies of the vehement young singer himself. If this method of modernizing poetry loses something of the richness peculiar to the language of the original, it gains in giving the effect of poetry of our own period; Catullus comes alive again in these translations of Mr. Gregory's, and his verse is made accessible and understandable to the modern reader.

Any translator must meet this problem: Shall he merely recast into acceptable English verse the poems of the original, or shall his task be to revitalize and clarify his texts for the general reader? If he decides on the latter course, he is subject to criticism from the scholars and literary minds of his time; but he certainly has with him the reader for whose delight he has done his work. Mr. Gregory has chosen to run the gauntlet of criticism in order to give his readers the poetry of Catullus palpitating with energy and with its original passion.

Not that Mr. Gregory has erred in matters of scholarship; he knows his Latin and knows it well. His choice of form is deliberate and carefully considered. Catullus, as we know, was one of the greatest of all love poets: his love had a furious intensity wherever it focused itself—upon Lesbia, upon his personal friends, upon nature. And his love could and did turn to hate; he was a good hater. His moods are many, and his styles vary with his moods: there is the plain colloquial Latin of the Lesbia cycle; there is the bitterly pointed epigram; there is the more intricate verse of the long hymns laden with mythological imagery. Mr. Gregory found that by using free verse he could give in his translations a much better approximation to the variety of verse patterning to be found in the original texts, and, moreover, that by using the language of today he could better express the mood of any particular poem. We find some of the best translations in the collection to be those of the romantic hymns, those conventionally patterned marriage hymns in which Catullus draws upon the legendary background of his race. Here Mr. Gregory's lines have all the necessary simplicity and epic dignity:

> Here silence and sand cover my words with silence and sand again, this is my only shelter and hope,
> a nightmare with the familiar face of death rising within my dreams.

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But now before death has covered the light of my eyes
with his dark hand, before all that I see, feel, hear has sunken
into the ground, and there is relief at last even for this body
that knows no rest, only disease of the mind and pain—
I shall call upon the gods, my last words echoing, my sobs resounding against high heaven
in this my last, my final hour.

Horace Gregory is, perhaps, of all the modern poets, best equipped for such a task as he has undertaken. His own poetry makes use of every nuance in our modern speech, of the entire range of vocabulary from impassioned poetic and literary imagery to the swift and pointed diction of the back streets. His own rhythms are original and develop out of the emotion expressed. They are not the reminiscent and too well-disciplined meters of a strictly literary poet. Nevertheless, his poems are a curious and effective intermingling of classical training (his own verse has been influenced by Catullus) with the accurate observation of a mind particularly sensitive to and analytical of the modern scene with its social and economic complexities. Mr. Gregory feels, evidently, that the world of Catullus was in some measure comparable to our world, that it was a world of unsavory politics, of economic maladjustment, and of intellectual cynicism. In such a period poetry is likely to find its only outlet in the expression of violent personal emotion. Being himself a poet in a world not altogether dissimilar to that of Catullus, Mr. Gregory is able to make the necessary identity between himself and the poet he would re-create, such an identity as must be made if the translation is to be authentic and of literary excellence.

Some criticism has been directed against Mr. Gregory for including among the poems of Catullus the many recovered bits of diatribe and satire which the poet might not have included himself, had he lived to edit his own work. It seems to me there is a decided advantage in having before us, in modern English, these fugitive bits of verse which give us a much more complete picture of the man Catullus and of the circumstances of his life. Have we not chosen to collect and include just such bits among the poems of Herrick, Donne, and Blake?

EDA LOU WALTON

"Progress" Hits Samoa

Samoa Under the Sailing Gods. By N. A. Rowe. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $5.

THIS is a sane, honest book, a careful attempt to set down for the world at large the series of shameful events which culminated with the shooting down of the young Samoan chief Tamasese in the streets of Apia, New Zealand Samoa, on December 29, 1929. Mr. Rowe gives an excellent picture of the conditions in Samoa at the time that New Zealand took over the mandate—in brief journalistic sketches of parties, meetings, slight episodes between officials and natives, letters written to the insurgent press, contacts with visitors, all of which are used to provide a record of the *mise en scène* which will prove invaluable as precise historical data later. And a very painful story it is, this account of the few years which transformed a happy, self-supporting colony into a comic-opera set-to between hysterical officials and proud and determined natives, a comedy, however, which terminated in martial law and in the death of a chief.

When the former German colony of Samoa was given to New Zealand to administer, one of the first moves of the new government was to pass a prohibition act for whites and natives alike. In the German days natives were not permitted to drink; and a half-caste chose whether he would pay white man's taxes and drink, or preserve his less expensive native status and not drink. The passing of the prohibition act precipitated ill feeling between the white settlers and the government, and set up on a small scale the same disregard of law which characterizes American prohibition. Under these conditions every other white man turned bootlegger, and the natives learned to drink. Meanwhile the Samoans were subjected to the stupid paternalism of a mean-minded and conceited governor. He forced them to remodel their villages, in which every stick and stone had been numbered from time immemorial; he formed their sons into Boy Scout bands, and tried to set the whole native community, with its graceful, considered patterns of etiquette and social relations, to saluting and forming fours. When native unrest culminated in a refusal of a chief to remove a fence on his own land, for which offense he was exiled from his native village, a body of dissenters known as the Mau formed among the Samoans and the disaffected white people. The governor dealt with it stupidly, refused permission to delegates to go to New Zealand, commanded the whites to disassociate themselves from the natives, barricaded a hill in Apia against the possibility of native attack, and generally showed a lack of tact, a lack of administrative ability which have seldom been equaled in the history of colonial administration. The numbers of the malcontents, under his efficient goading, swelled from a handful of Samoans to all but the entire population; plantations suffered, trade suffered, the League of Nations was annoyed at such unrest in a mandatory; and finally the New Zealand government had to import white police to end the violent disagreements which a few tactful words could have kept from ever beginning.

It is a local enough tale, this story of how a white governor, mad for recognition of his reforms and improvements, shattered the peace and prosperity of one of the most amiable, least contentious, and most peaceful peoples in the world. Mr. Rowe would draw a moral against the Mandates Commission, which he insists incited New Zealand to violence. For this assertion I do not feel that he presents sufficient proof. It is possible to draw a wider moral. This fiasco, like so many others, came from the vanity of a governor who wished to boast of improvements. Back of him stood a political system which would be satisfied only with change, which had no respect for an administration which could report merely peace and prosperity. This is the same Protestant missionizing point of view which demands that native peoples put on trousers and erect frame houses; from a government angle they must build latrines which they don't use, remodel their villages to look like cheap suburbs, and go to school to learn things which will be of no use to them. Unless such reforms are reported, the administration is a failure. As a result, not only General Richardson but other British and American governors also are continually making stupid spectacular attempts to alter the quiet rationale of the lives of native peoples, in order that their home reformers may applaud them. The whole miserable affair in Samoa may be phrased as the attempt of a governor with too much power to please a provincial-minded audience. It is a pity that New Zealand, with her fine record in the treatment of the Maoris, should have become involved in such a disgraceful business.

Mr. Rowe makes some slight attempt to deal with the early history of the country, choosing, mainly from revealing missionary accounts, stories which will point his not unjustified animus against missionaries. Where he does discuss native custom he is accurate and reliable. Of American Samoa he has, most felicitously, nothing to say, except to comment on the way the naval government succeeded in preserving American Samoa from the influenza which swept the Pacific. But the naval governors to date have not had to puff up their reputations with tales of town planning and Boy Scouts. The un-

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fortunate results of New Zealand's attempt at government should serve as a sufficient warning to the United States not to demand similar "progress" in American Samoa.

MARGARET MEAD

Books in Brief

The Last Stand. By Edmund A. Walsh. Little, Brown and Company. $3.

Father Walsh is the outstanding anti-Bolshevik Catholic in the United States. He once represented the Vatican in Moscow, but now opposes any diplomatic dealings with the Soviet state. This book is a shrill cry against the Five-Year Plan and everything that Russia stands for today. Anybody who says a word in favor of the Bolsheviks is an "apologist," but the adverse critics are quoted at length and with the author's approval. Fortunately, Father Walsh can make no pretense at impartiality. This book, and his record, preclude that. "The Last Stand" contains most of the usual anti-Communist arguments thrown, helter-skelter, into one basket and salted down with ineffective invective. "The Fall of the Russian Empire" by the same writer was much better written, but the tract under review is not so gory and sensational as its predecessor. Dr. Walsh promises to continue the discussion in two further volumes. By the time they appear he may know the fate of the Five-Year Plan. Just now, he says, "the scales . . . would seem to hang even." He adds, however, that "the Five-Year Plan may even be a definite challenge to our economic complacency." In a final chapter Father Walsh argues fiercely against United States recognition of the Soviet Government.

Puritan's Progress. By Arthur Train. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

This is an odd volume, for the most part highly entertaining, often illuminating, occasionally profound. Mr. Train, writing in the familiar style of the modern magazine article, and stringing his subject matter along the thread of his family genealogical history and his autobiography, discusses such of the changing aspects of American life as suit his fancy. He has delved into many an out-of-the-way corner and dug up a number of attractive little nuggets in the way of anecdote and document. And he has used his many secondary sources to advantage. He branches out into the realms of history, economics, sociology, biography whenever he feels he has something good to say—and usually he has. The last chapters are not so good as the beginning and the middle of the book. One wishes that the last two had been omitted, partly because the method has been overdone and here seems but a faint echo of Mark Sullivan's "Our Times," partly because, especially in the last chapter, Mr. Train, though his optimism and faith in progress may be allowed him as perfectly legitimate, has descended from the wise temperate method of the good popular historian to the banal manner of the conventional "forward looker."

Fiddlers' Green. By Albert R. Wetjen. Little, Brown and Company. $2.

The presentation of factual material against a fictional background—or foreground—sometimes results in so much confusion of fact and fancy that one is disposed to approach any book employing such technique with distrust. Fortunately preconceived fears turn out to be groundless in the case of Mr. Wetjen's volume. His underlying object is to tell what he has been able to find out about the legends of the sea—the stories of the Flying Dutchman, Mother Carey, Davy Jones, the Man Who Flogged the Dolphin, and others—but these tales are mostly so fragmentary and uncertain that they become more

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In the Van

ALMOST, if not quite, too late the emergency conference of seven nations has concluded its three days' sittings in London in a twilight effort to avert ruin for Germany and political chaos for Europe.

How significant, in view of this forced development in late July, is the communication addressed to The Nation *from London LAST FEBRUARY 18 by Oswald Garrison Villard. The letter, as it appeared in* The Nation *of March 18, began:*

European conference has followed upon European conference. And so many of them have ended in total failure or a flimsy pretense of success that people everywhere are cynical or disgusted, declaring that "they always end in talk." Fortunately there are exceptions to the record—first of all, the notable success of the late Indian conference, which achieved the apparently impossible, thanks to the courage, skill, and persistency of Ramsay MacDonald. But if there were no favorable precedents whatever, it would still seem to me that another conference ought to be called at the earliest possible moment.

What kind of conference? A conference among the heads of a small group of nations—Italy, the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium—for the purpose of examining immediately the actual situation in Europe and taking some steps to end the present world-wide economic crisis. Here again I hear dissent: Has there not just been an economic conference at Geneva, which gave to the press of the world an excellent statement of economic conditions, signed by twenty-seven nations? The answer is that this is not the time for statements, whether they are signed by twenty-seven nations or by all the nations on earth. What the hour calls for is *action*, and action before it is too late.

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substantial when strung on a thread of the author's own fancy. Some will enjoy "Fiddlers' Green" purely as an underseas story of imagination and humor. Others will value it as an anthology of sailor folklore, none the less authentic because of Mr. Wetjen's fictional contribution.

Confucius and Confucianism. By Richard Wilhelm. Translated by George H. Danton and Annina Periam Danton. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $1.75.

Richard Wilhelm was a German missionary who, instead of converting, was converted to Chinese civilization and became one of the most distinguished Sinologues of our time. The present volume accomplishes a great deal in its small compass. It supplies a translation of those passages in the work of the historian Sse Ma Chien which deal with the life of Confucius; it continues with a bibliographic study of the Confucian classics; then discusses the works of those followers of Confucius who have become incorporated in the Confucian canon; and concludes with a clear interpretation of Confucian doctrine, enforced by specimen texts from the classics. A valuable little book that makes hard but rewarding reading, to which the translators have valuably contributed from their own broad scholarship.

Lost Courts of Europe. The World I Used to Know, 1860-1912. By Marie von Bunsen. Edited and Translated by Oakley Williams. Harper and Brothers. $4.

Marie von Bunsen, born in 1860 of German-English parents who socially were of the elect, has here set down in a charming style her memories and impressions of a cosmopolitan society thickly sprinkled with notable personalities. The prudish notions of a conventional German upbringing seem to have impeded her for a time, but she early emancipated herself and danced, dined, flirted, traveled, and conversed her way through courts and drawing-rooms in a lively though discreet fashion. One of her experiences was a visit to America in 1888 when her father was a guest of Henry Villard at the opening of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The European celebrities with whom she was on more or less intimate terms include three German emperors—William I, Frederick, and William II—Edward VII when he was Prince of Wales, Bismarck, von Moltke, Disraeli, Browning, Rodin, the explorer Stanley, Queen Carmen Sylva, and the crown princess who became Queen Marie of Rumania. Her observations, while full of vitality, are made with a cool self-possession which makes them a kind of running interpretation of the society of a past age. There is not a dull page in the book. The translation embodies some modifications of the German original, chiefly in the omission of allusions of merely local interest.

A History of the Pacific Northwest. By George W. Fuller. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

This history is distinctly of the "local" type. The story of the Oregon country (now divided into the States of Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington) is treated in much the same way that has become familiar in histories of Eastern towns or counties. This is possible because the brevity of the history offsets the vast extent of the territory. The author is apt to slip when he leaves his local footing. For example: his brief statement of the cause of the Mexican War will scarcely satisfy most historians; it is Korea, not Japan, which is nicknamed the "Hermit Kingdom"; the British Minister to the United States who helped to settle the Oregon dispute was Pakenham, not Packenham, as he appears here in each reference. However, the book, like all local histories, must be judged by its fund of local material rather than by its preliminary geological and anthropological chapters or its occasional strayings into national history. Mr. Fuller has assem-

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bled a large amount of local antiquarian lore from diverse sources, which later are indicated in forty-two pages of bibliographical notes. With scarcely any exceptions, and those unimportant, the references are all to material already in print, so that the work is a compendium rather than one of original research. This may detract from its importance but not from its usefulness. Except for an enthusiastic Northwesterner the book would be rather heavy reading in any case, but the publishers have made it formidable by small print, long lines, and physical weight.

Four Cents an Acre. The Story of Louisiana Under the French. By Georges Oudard. Translated by Margery Bianco. Brewer and Warren. $3.50.

One fears that Georges Oudard is one of those writers who have set out to make history "interesting." History is never otherwise when freed from pedantry and allowed to unfold itself simply and naturally. But when you try to make it "vivid" and "colorful" and "picturesque," you often make it murky and you are apt to make it untrue. It is hard to follow the thread of Mr. Oudard's story, and his failure to connect old names of places with existing ones sometimes makes his geography hazy. His sins against truth are not so much actual misstatements—although he puts the second big fire of New Orleans in 1792 instead of 1794—as distorted emphasis. He entitles his chapter on the voyage of Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet, The Discovery of the Mississippi, dismissing lightly the finding of the river by De Soto more than a century earlier, on the ground that the Spaniards stumbled upon the Father of Waters by accident while looking for something else. What would the author say of Columbus, who bumped into the Western Hemisphere by chance when in search of a route to the East Indies?

Ten Years of World Cooperation. Foreword by Sir Eric Drummond. Geneva: Secretariat of the League of Nations.

This volume of 467 pages has been prepared as "a simple record of the work done by the League during the first ten years of its existence." A brief introduction summarizing the history of the League and describing its organization is followed by fourteen chapters dealing with the work of the League as represented in the peaceful settlement of disputes, the organization of peace and disarmament, the World Court, the codification of international law, financial and economic cooperation, international transit and communications, health, social and humanitarian activities, intellectual cooperation, the mandates system, protection of minorities, the Saar territory and the Free City of Danzig, the financial administration of the League, and League relations with public opinion. As a compendium of information from which advocacy and propaganda have been carefully excluded, the book is heartily to be commended to any who wish to know what the League has done or the methods by which it operates. Its reference value would have been increased if the names of the principal members of the League staff and of the various commissions had been included.

Horace Walpole's Fugitive Verses. Collected and edited by W. S. Lewis. Oxford University Press. $8.50.

This amounts to a collected edition of Walpole's poetry. As such it is valuable only for what it adds to our knowledge of the master of Strawberry Hill, whom Mr. Lewis has made the subject of several other compilations for connoisseurs. The poetry in itself is sad enough; but each little piece, placed by Mr. Lewis in its setting in the correspondence or elsewhere, becomes a memento of the master, and as such has its real though often rather absurd charm.

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See pages iii, iv and v for SUMMER Advertising

Films

SOS

ON this, the third anniversary of the talking picture ("The Jazz King" startled the world in the summer of 1928), I find myself quite unable to offer the usual congratulations. The promise the talking picture held out at its birth of growing into something worthy of public respect and even admiration has not been fulfilled. Today it looks so utterly sick both in body and mind that unless some drastic change takes place it seems destined to drag on a miserable existence as a deformed and blabbering half-wit.

In saying this I do not mean to suggest that I greatly miss its elder brother, the Hollywood silent picture, whom it dispatched into limbo with such childish unconcern. On this point the situation was summed up pointedly about a year ago by Mr. Rex Ingram, the well-known director of "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," who expressed himself in these words: "Silent films are finished—and a good thing, too. The plain truth is that the motion-picture industry was like a man dying of anemia . . . Everybody has been doing the same old thing. There was nothing fresh to do. You had the same old stories and, with trifling alterations, the same old situations; and you could do nothing more with them."

This needs but one qualification. If the motion picture resembled a man dying of anemia it was not because of the silence of the silent picture, but because of the moronic standards of film-making that Hollywood considered the alpha and omega of cinematic wisdom. One notes two significant facts. In Soviet Russia for the past three or four years the silent picture had attained a level of artistic expression that had made it the most vital and widely acclaimed contribution to the art. By contrast, in this country the silent picture had lost favor with the public long before the sensational arrival of the talking picture. It was a fortunate thing for the Hollywood movie lords that the talking picture arrived when it did. It caught the imagination of the public and regained for the movies their lost ascendancy. But Hollywood never learned its lesson. It has treated the talkie as shabbily as its silent predecessor, and today it is reaping the results of its stupid and shortsighted policy in the growing indifference of the public and the threat that this implies to its financial returns.

Is the situation then so utterly hopeless? I believe it can still be saved, but this needs an enlightened policy on the part both of the producers and the public. It seems almost incredible that of all the big industries in this country the movie industry is practically the only one that conducts no organized artistic and scientific research. A new idea in film-making must be presented in a complete and finished form before the producers will condescend to look at it. And the cost of making a film being usually beyond the means of an individual worker, this attitude virtually destroys all chances of any original conception ever being tried and developed for practical use. The producers must realize that what is at stake today is the prestige of the movies itself, and there is no way of maintaining that prestige except by encouraging, if only on a small scale, untrameled artistic and scientific effort, and by cultivating, even if it does not result in high profits, the support and interest of the discriminating minority of the public. The latter for its part can help to save the movies. All it needs is to make its disaffection and demands sufficiently vocal. One of the ways of doing this is to form a genuine public organization on the lines of the Film Society of London.

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